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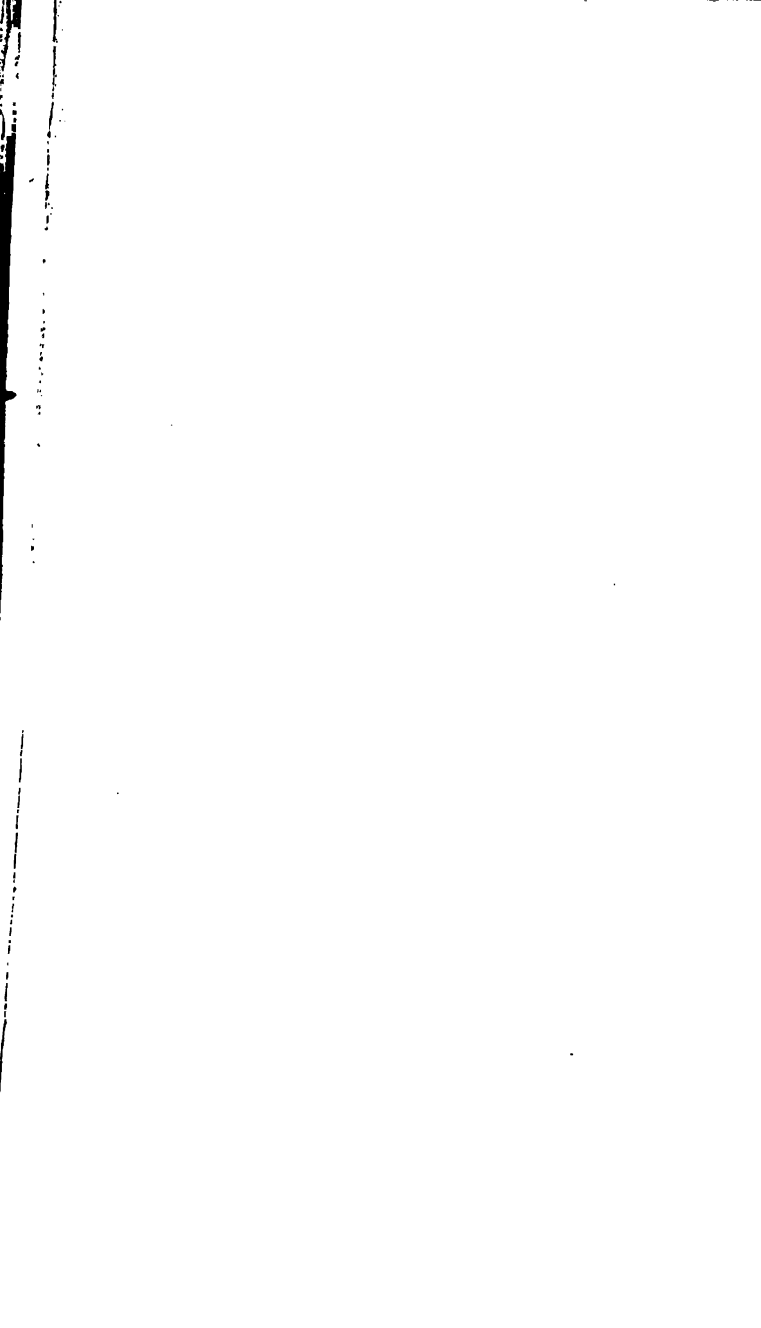
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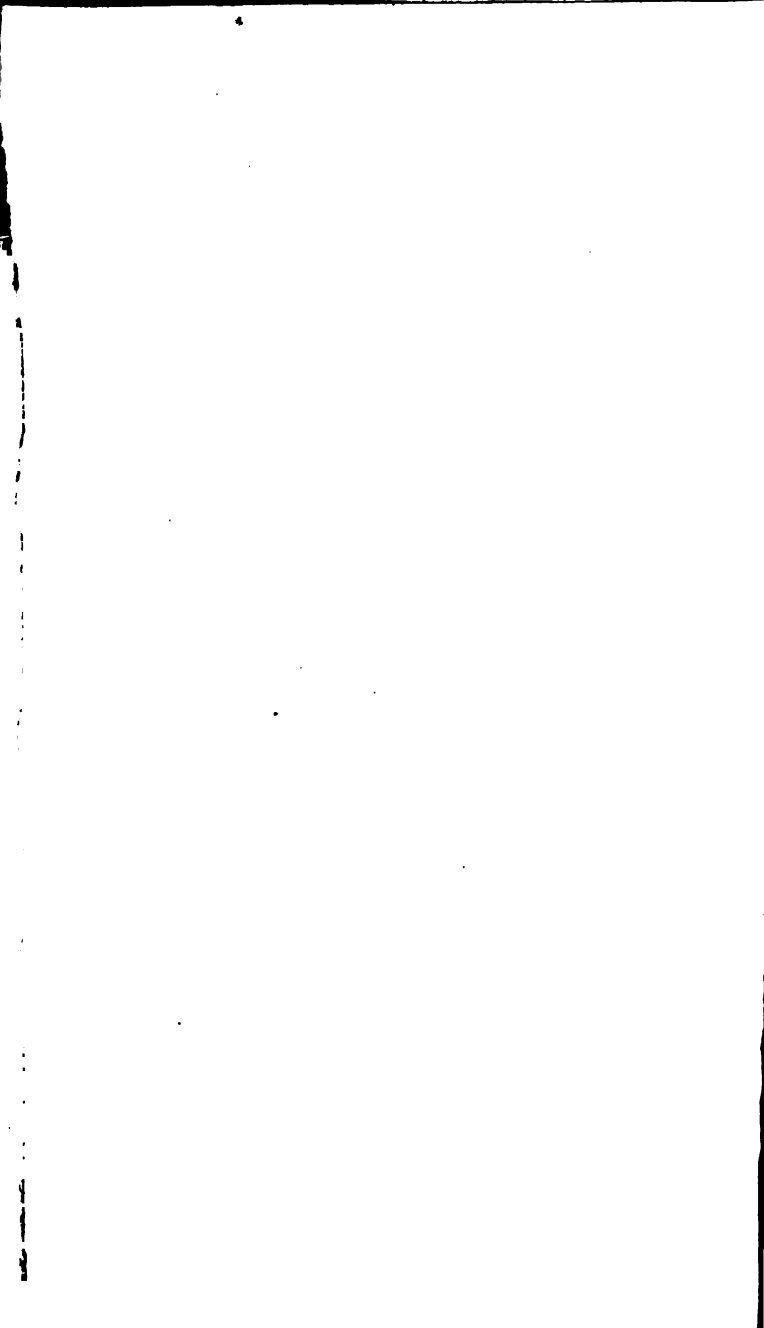
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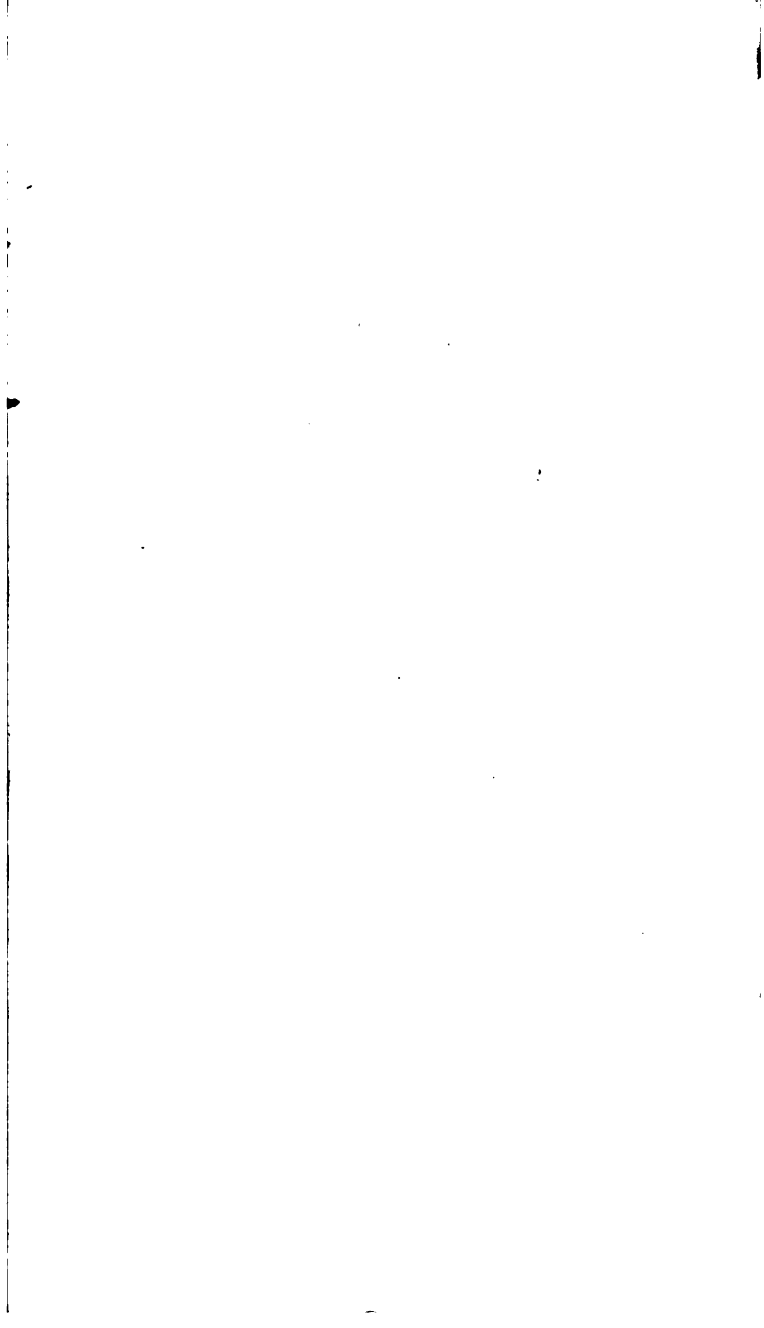


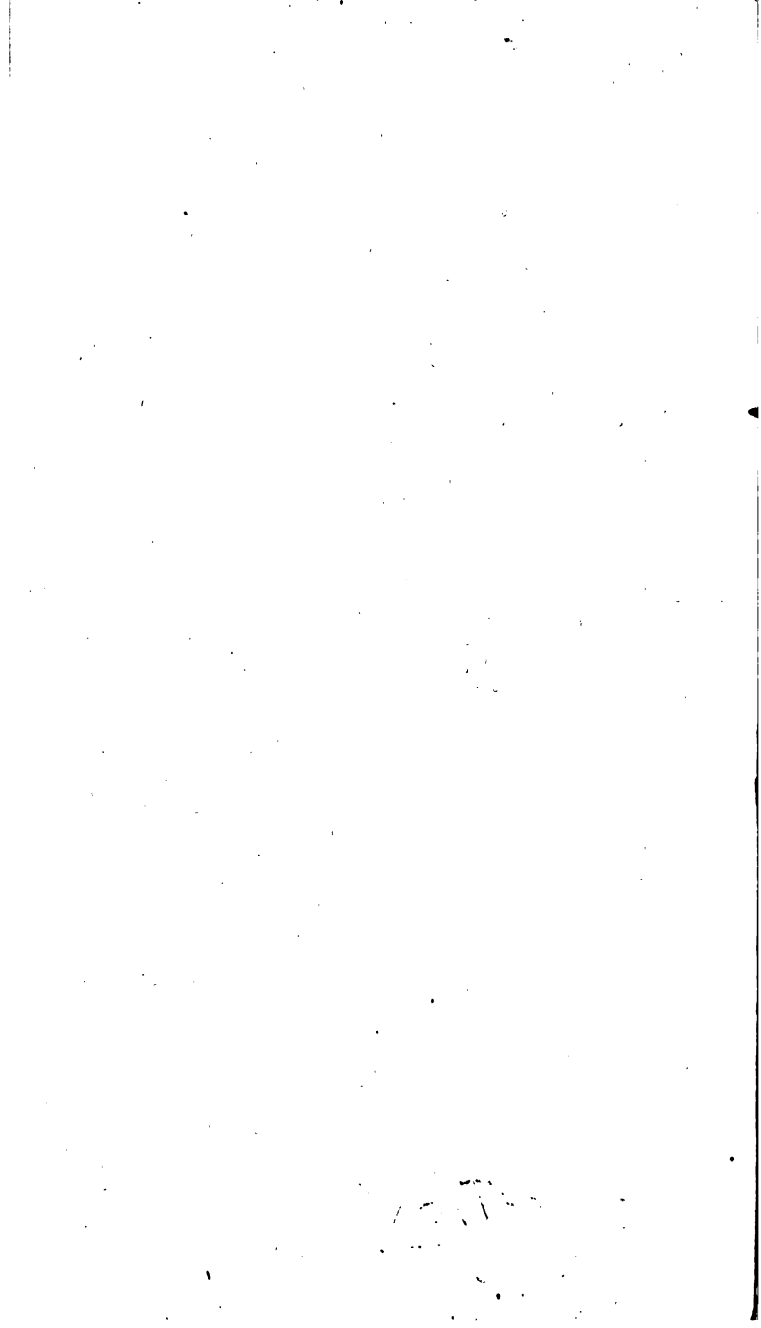
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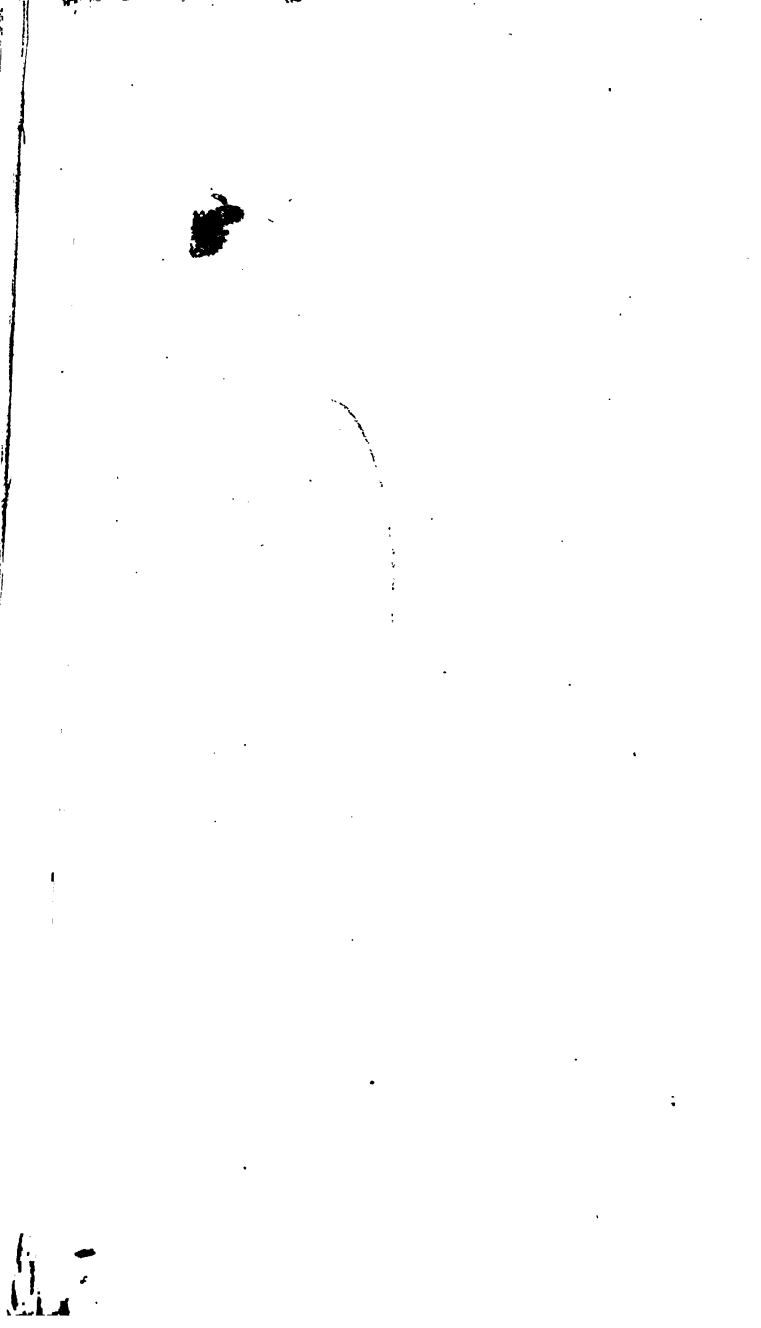


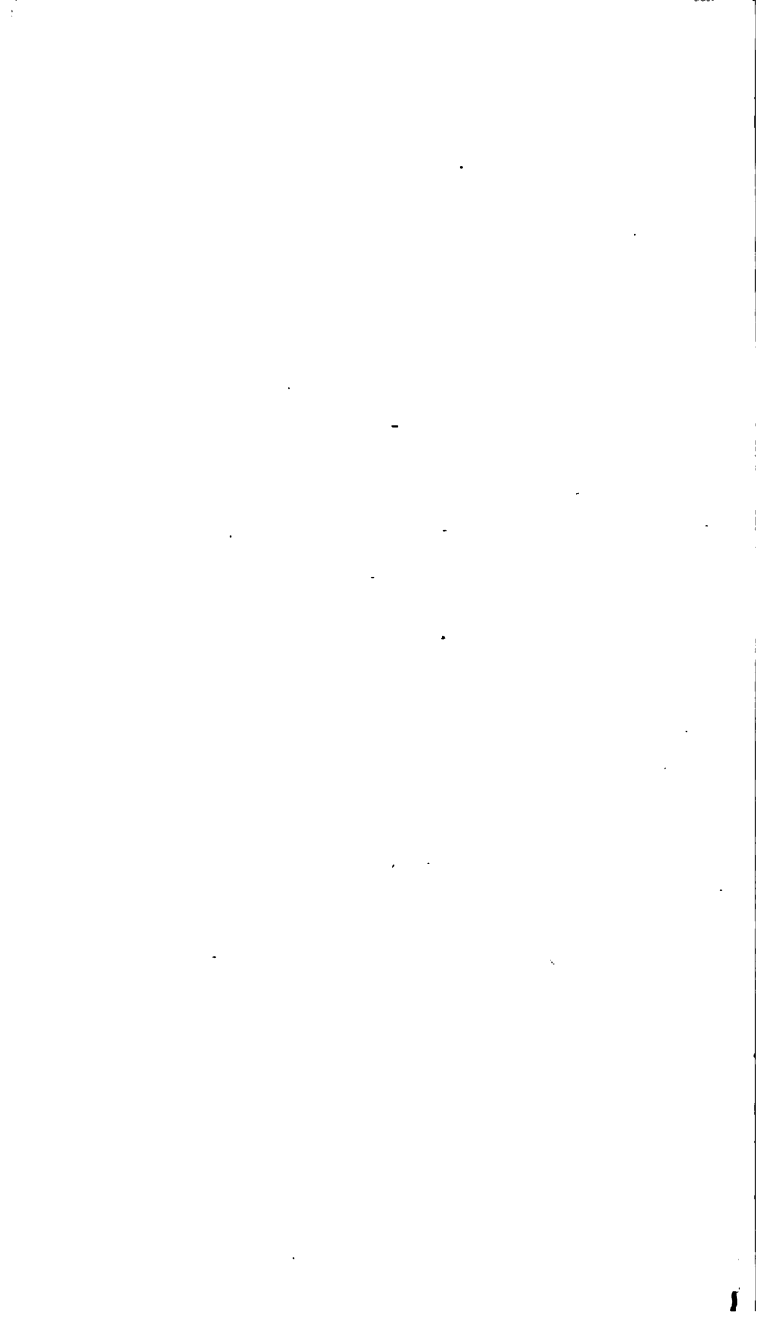












THE HENRIAD;

A POEM;

WITH THE NOTES AND VARIATIONS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

OF
M. DE VOLTAIRE.

M. DE VOLTAIRE.

BY CHARLES L. S. JONES.



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THE

IDEA OF THE HENRIAD.

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The subject of the *Henriad* is the siege of Paris, commenced by Henry de Valois and Henry the Great; finished by the last alone.

The place of the scene does not extend further than from Paris to Ivry, where that famous battle was fought, which decided the fate of France and of the royal house.

The poem is founded upon a known history, the truth of which has been preserved in the principal events. Others less important, have been retrenched, or arranged according to that appearance of truth which a poem exacts. We have endeavoured in it to shun the fault of Lucain, who made but a high flown gazette; and we have as a warrant the verses of M. Despreaux already cited.*

Besides we have done nothing more than what is practised in all tragedies, where the events are conformed to the rules of the theatre.

Finally, this poem is not more historical than others. Camouens, who is the Virgil of the Portuguese, has celebrated an event of which he had been himself a witness. Tasso has sung a crusade known

* See the notes on the sixth canto.

to all the world, and has omitted neither the hermit Peter, nor the processions. Virgil has constructed his *Ænead* but from the current fables of his time, which passed for the true history of the descent of *Æneas* on Italy. Homer, a cotemporary of Hesiod, and who consequently lived about a hundred years after the taking of Troy, might easily have seen, in his youth, old men who had known the heroes of that war. What ought to please the more in Homer, is, that the foundation of his work is not a romance; that the characters are not of his imagination; that he has painted men such as they were, with their good and bad qualities, and that his book is a monument of the manners of these remote times.

The *Henriad* is composed of two parts, of real events of which I am going to give an account, and of fictions. These fictions are all drawn from the system of the marvellous, such as the prediction of the conversion of Henry IV., the protection which St. Louis gives him, his apparition, the fire from heaven destroying those magical operations which were so common, &c. The others are purely allegorical: of this number are the voyage of Discord to Rome, Policy, Fanaticism personified, the temple of Love; in fine the passions and vices

• Taking a body, spirit, visage, soul.

If there has been given in some places to these personified passions, the same attributes which the pagans gave them, it is because these allegorical attributes are too well known to be changed. Love has his arrows, Justice has a balance in our most christian works, in our paintings, in our tapestries, without these representations having the least tincture of paganism. The word *Amphritite* in our poetry signifies but the sea, and not the spouse of Neptune: the field of Mars would express nothing but war, &c. If any one be of a contrary opinion, we must refer him again to that great master M. Despreaux, who says:

“It is a vain scruple to alarm oneself foolishly, and to wish to please the reader without his own consent. They will soon prohibit your painting Prudence at all, of giving to Themis either bandage or balance, of figuring to the eyes War with his brazen front, or Time flying with his hour glass in his hand; and from the whole discourse, will every where attempt to chase Allegory away as idolatrous.”

Having rendered an account of what this work contains, we deem it necessary to say a word of the spirit in which it has been composed.

We have been desirous to neither flatter nor revile. Those, who may find here the evil deeds of their ancestors, have but to repair them by their own virtue. Those, whose ancestors are mentioned in it with eulogy, owe no acknowledgements to the author, who had nothing in view but truth; and the sole usage they should make of these praises is to endeavour to merit the like.

If there are, in this edition, some verses retrenched, which contained truths somewhat severe against the popes who formerly dishonoured the holy chair by their crimes, it is that we would not desire to pass upon the court of Rome the affront of thinking it desirous of rendering the memory of those wicked pontiffs respectable. The French who condemn the wickedness of Louis XI. and of Catherine de Medicis, can speak, without doubt, with horror of Alexander VI. But the author has pruned that morsel, simply because it was too long, and because there were in it some verses with which he was not entirely satisfied.

It was with this single view that he has put many names, in the place of those which appeared in the first editions, according as he found them more convenient for his subject, or as the names themselves appeared to him more sonorous. The only policy in a poem should be to make good verses. The death of the young Boufflers has been retrenched, whom we

had supposed to have been slain by Henry IV., since in that circumstance, the death of that young prince seemed to render Henry IV. rather odious without rendering him great. Duplessis-Mornay we send to England to Queen Elizabeth, as in truth he was, and there is still a remembrance there of his negotiation. Use has been made of the same Duplessis-Mornay, in the remainder of the poem, since having acted the part of the king's confidant in the first canto, it would have been ridiculous that another had taken his part in the succeeding ones; the same as it would have been absurd in a Tragedy, (Berenice, for instance,) that Titus should make a confidant of Pauline in the first act, and of some other person, in the fifth. If any should see proper to give unfavourable interpretations to these changes, the author ought not to disquiet himself; he knows that every writing is made to endure the shafts of malice.

The most important point is religion, which forms a great part of the subject of the poem, and which alone makes the catastrophe.

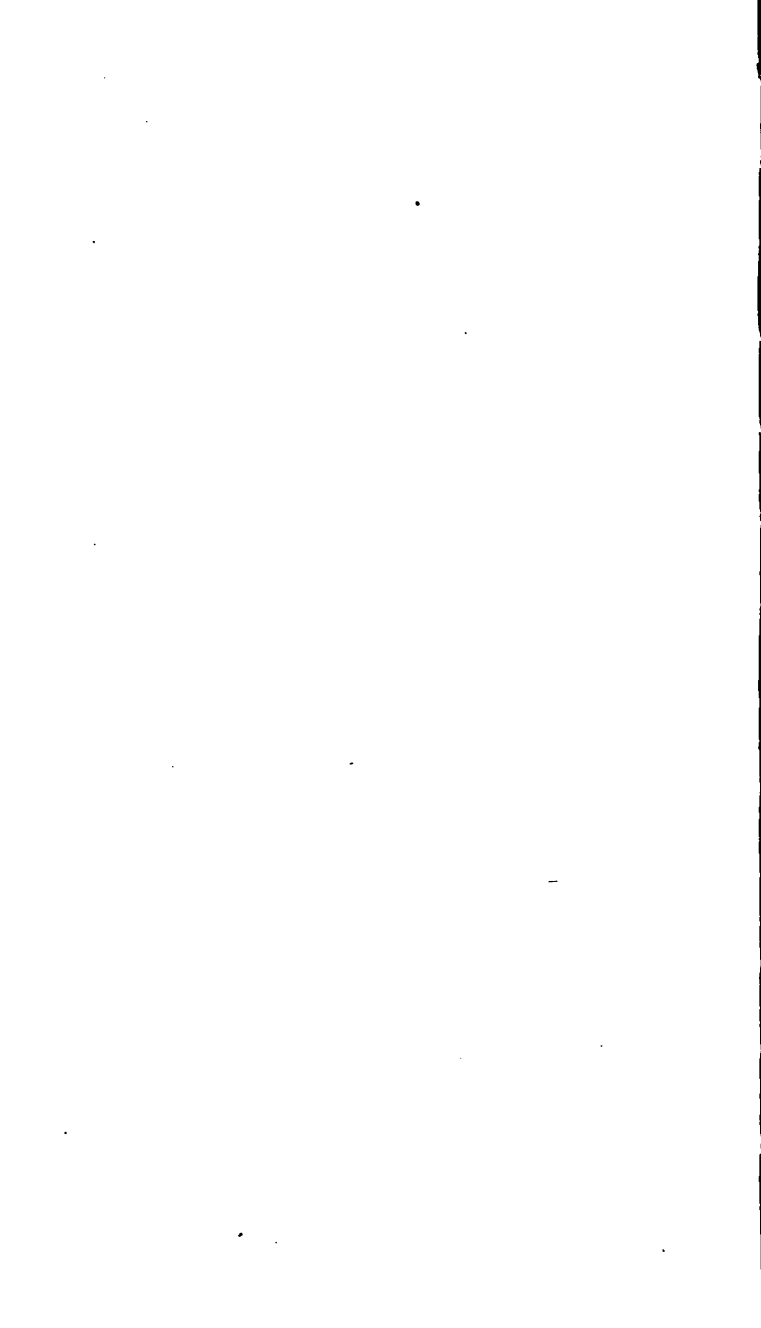
The author flatters himself with having explained himself with a precision so rigorous, in many places, as to yield no room for censure. Such is, for instance, that small piece concerning the Trinity.

Pow'r, Love, and Wisdom to perfection rais'd,
United and divided form Him one.

And this:

The church below, here militant, he own'd,
The church e'er one, and reaching every where,
Free, but beneath one chief, adoring all,
In the saint's bliss, the grandeur of its God.
Christ, of our sins the daily victim born,
Of his elect belov'd the living food,
Upon the altars to his eyes descends,
And, in the mystic loaf, the God reveals.

If he has not been able, throughout, to express himself with theological exactness, the reasonable reader should supply it. It would be an extreme injustice to examine the whole work as a treatise on theology. The poem breathes nothing but a love of religion and of the laws. It shows an equal detestation of rebellion and of persecution: judgement should not be passed, for a word, on a book written in such a spirit.



AN ABRIDGED

HISTORY OF THE EVENTS

UPON WHICH IS FOUNDED THE STORY OF

THE POEM OF THE HENRIAD.

The fire of the civil wars, of which Francis II. saw the first sparklings, had inflamed France, during the minority of Charles IX. Religion was the subject amongst the people, and the pretext amongst the great. The queen mother, Catharine de Medicis, had more than once hazarded the safety of the realm to preserve her authority, arming the catholic party against the protestant, and the Guises against the Bourbons, to overwhelm the one by the other.

France had, at that time, to her misfortune, very many powerful, consequently factious lords; people rendered fanatic and barbarous by that party fury which false zeal inspires, and infant kings, in whose names the state was ravaged. The battles of Dreux, St. Denis, Jarnac and Montcontour, had signalized the unfortunate reign of Charles IX.; the great cities had been taken, re-taken, and sacked in turn, by the opposite parties; they had put their prisoners of war to death by unheard of punishments; the churches had been laid in ashes by the reformed, the conventicles by the catholics; empoisonments and assassinations had been regarded but as the vengeance of active enemies.

he was ready to partake of the royal authority by the consent of those who represented the nation, and under an appearance of formality the most respectable. Henry III. aroused by this pressing danger, caused that enemy so dangerous, to be assassinated, at the Chateau de Blois, as well as the cardinal his brother, who was more violent and ambitious still, than the Duke de Guise.

That which happened to the protestant party, after the St. Barthelemi happened to the league: the death of the chiefs re-awoke the party. The leaguers raised the mask; Paris closed its gates; nothing but vengeance was thought of. Henry III. was regarded as the assassin of the defenders of religion, and not as a king who had punished his guilty subjects. It became necessary that Henry III., who was pressed on all sides, should reconcile himself, at last, with the Navarrese. These two princes came to encamp before Paris; and it is there that the Henriad begins.

The Duke de Guise left another brother; this was the Duke de Mayenne, an intrepid man, but rather skilful than enterprising, who saw himself, at once, at the head of a faction, instructed in his forces, and animated by vengeance and fanaticism.

Nearly all Europe entered into this war. The celebrated Elizabeth, queen of England, who was full of esteem for the king of Navarre, and who had ever an extreme desire of seeing him, assisted him many times, with men, money, vessels; and it was Duplessis-Mornay who always went to England to solicit these succours. On the other side, the branch of Austria that reigned over Spain, favoured the league, in the hope of plucking some spoils from a kingdom rent by civil war. The popes fought against the king of Navarre, not only by excommunications, but by all the artifices of policy, and by those small succours of men and money which the court of Rome could furnish.

Meantime Henry III. was about to make himself master of Paris when he was assassinated, at St. Cloud, by a dominican monk, who committed the murder perhaps under the sole idea that he was obeying God, and that he was rushing to martyrdom; but this murder was not simply the crime of this fanatic monk—it was the crime of the whole party. Public opinion, the belief of all these leaguers, was, that it was necessary to kill their king, if he was in bad standing with the court of Rome: the preachers sung it aloud in their vile discourses; it was printed in all those pitiable books which inundated France, and may perhaps be found, at this day, in some libraries, as curious monuments of an age equally barbarous both in letters and in manners.

After the death of Henry III., the king of Navarre, (Henry the Great), recognized king of France by the army, had to sustain all the forces of the league, and to conquer those of Rome, of Spain, and of his kingdom. He blockaded, and besieged Paris many times at intervals. Amongst the great men who were serviceable to him in this war and of whom we have made some use in this poem, may be counted the Marshals d'Aumont and de Biron, the Duke de Bouillon, &c. Duplessis-Mornay was in his most intimate confidence until that prince's change of religion: he served him personally in his armies, with his pen against the ex-communications of the popes, and by his great art of negotiating, in seeking succour for him amongst all the protestant princes.

The principal chief of the league was the Duke de Mayenne: the one who had the greatest reputation, after him was the Chevalier d'Aumale, a young prince, known by his pride, and that brilliant courage which particularly distinguished the house of Guise. They obtained many succours from Spain; but there is no reference here to any except the famous Count d'Egmont, son of the admiral, who brought thirteen or fourteen hundred lances to the Duke de Mayenne.

There were many actions fought, the most famous of which, the most decisive, and the most glorious for Henry IV., was the battle of Ivry, where the Duke de Mayenne was conquered, and the Count d'Egmont slain.

During the course of that war, the king had become enamoured of the fair Gabrielle d'Estrees; but his courage became not in the least effeminated by her; witness the letter, which is still to be seen in the library of the king, in which he says to his mistress: "If I am conquered, you know me sufficiently to believe that I shall not fly; but my last thought shall be my God's, and that preceding it your's."

Finally, there are many considerable facts omitted, which not having a place in the poem, ought not to have here. We have said nothing either of the expedition of the Duke of Parma into France, which served but to retard the fall of the league, or of that Cardinal de Bourbon, who was for a while a phantom of a king under the name of Charles X. It suffices to say, that after so many misfortunes and such desolation, Henry IV. became catholic, and that the Parisians, who hated his religion and revered his person, then recognized him as their king.

AN ESSAY

UPON

THE CIVIL WARS OF FRANCE.*

Henry the Great was born in 1553, at Pau, a small city, the capital of Bearn; Anthony of Bourbon, Duke de Vendome, his father, was of the blood-royal of France, and chief of the branch of Bourbon, (which word, otherwise used, signified muddy or miry,) so called from a fief of that name, which fell to their house by a marriage with the heiress de Bourbon.

The house of Bourbon, from Louis IX. to Henry IV. had almost always been neglected, and reduced to such a degree of poverty, that it has been pretended that the famous Prince de Conde, brother of Anthony de Navarre, and uncle of Henry the Great, had not more than six hundred livres income from his patrimony.

The mother of Henry was Jane d'Albret, daughter of Henry d'Albret, king of Navarre, a prince without merit, though a good man, rather indolent than peaceable, who sustained with much resignation the loss of his kingdom, which was taken from his father by a papal bull, supported by the arms of Spain. Jane, daughter of a prince so feeble, had besides, a husband still more so, to whom she carried in marriage the principality of Bearn, and the vain title of king of Navarre.

* The Author had written this small piece in English, when the *Henriad* was printed at London.

This prince, who lived in a time of factions and civil wars, where firmness of spirit is so necessary, showed nothing but uncertainty and irresolution in his conduct. He never knew of which party or of which religion he was. Without talents for a court, and without capacity for the employment of general of an army, he passed all his life in favouring his enemies and in ruining his servants; made the sport of Catherine de Medicis, amused and overwhelmed by the Guises, and always the dupe of himself. He received a mortal wound at the siege of Rouen, where he was fighting for the cause of his enemies against the interest of his own house. He evinced in dying, the same unquiet and floating spirit that had agitated him during life. Jane d'Albret had the very opposite character; full of courage and resolution, feared by the court of France, cherished by the protestants, and esteemed by both parties; she had all the qualities which make great politicians; ignorant, in the mean time, of the little artifices of intrigue and cabal. One remarkable thing is, that she became a protestant at the same time in which her husband became again a catholic, and was as constantly attached to the new religion as Anthony was wavering in his. It was thereby she saw herself at the head of one party, whilst her husband was the sport of the other.

Jealous of the education of her son, she wished herself alone to take care of him. Henry bore, in growing up, all the excellent qualities of his mother, and carried them afterwards to a higher degree of perfection. He had inherited from his father only a certain ease of humour, which in Anthony, degenerated into uncertainty and weakness, but which, in Henry, was benevolence and good humour.

He was not raised, as a prince, in that loose and effeminate pride which enervates the body, enfeebles the spirit, and hardens the heart. His nourishment was gross, and his habits simple and regular. He always went bare-headed. He was sent to

school with young people of his own age ; he climbed with them over the rocks and over the summits of the neighbouring mountains, according to the custom of the country and of the times.

During the time he was thus raised in the midst of his subjects, in a species of equality, without which it is easy for a prince to forget that he is born a man, fortune displayed in France a bloody scene, and over the wrecks of a kingdom nearly destroyed, and over the ashes of many princes taken away by a premature death, opened to him the way to a throne, which he could not re-establish in its ancient splendour until after having made a conquest of it.

Henry II., king of France, chief of the Valois branch, was slain at Paris in a tournament, which was the last, in Europe, of those romantic and perilous diversions.

He left four sons, Francis II., Charles IX., Henry III., and the Duke d'Alençon. All these unworthy descendents of Francis I. successively mounted the throne, excepting the Duke d'Alençon, and died, happily, in the flower of their age, but without posterity.

The reign of Francis II. was short but remarkable. It was then those factions broke out, and those calamities commenced, which for thirty years in succession, ravaged the kingdom of France.

He espoused the celebrated and unhappy Mary Stuart, queen of Scotland, whose beauty and weakness led him into great faults, to the greatest misfortunes, and at last to a premature and deplorable end. She was the absolute mistress of her young husband, a prince of twenty-eight, without vices and without virtues, born with a delicate body and a feeble spirit. Incapable of governing by herself, she delivered herself without reserve to the Duke de Guise, the brother of her mother. He influenced the spirit of the king by her means, and laid thereby the foundation of the greatness of his own house. It was during

this time that Catherine de Medicis, widow of the deceased king, and mother of the reigning one, suffered to appear the first sparklings of her ambition, which she had ably concealed during the life of Henry III. But seeing herself incapable of domineering over the spirit of her son, and over a young princess whom he loved passionately, she thought it more to her advantage to be for some time their instrument, and to make use of their power to establish her authority, than uselessly to oppose herself to them. Thus the Guises governed the king, and the two queens. Masters of the court, they became the masters of all the kingdom: the one in France, is ever a necessary consequence of the other.

The house of Bourbon groaned under the oppression of the house of Lorraine; and Anthony, king of Navarre, suffered tranquilly many affronts of a dangerous consequence. The Prince de Conde his brother, still more unworthily treated, endeavoured to shake off the yoke, and associated himself for that great design with the Admiral de Coligny, chief of the house of Chatillon. The court had not an enemy more formidable.—Conde was more ambitious, more enterprising, more active; Coligny was of a disposition more firm, more measured in his conduct, more capable of being the head of a party; in truth, as unfortunate in war as Conde, but repairing often by his ability that which seemed irreparable; more dangerous after a defeat than his enemies after a victory; ornamented, besides, with as many virtues as times so stormy, and the spirit of factions would permit.

The protestants, who were beginning to become numerous, soon perceived their force.

Superstition, the secret impostures of the monks of that period, the immense power of Rome, the passion of mankind for novelty, the ambition of Luther and of Calvin, and the policy of princes, served for the increase of this sect, free, in truth,

from superstition, but tending as impetuously to anarchy as the religion of Rome to tyranny.

The protestants had undergone in France, the most violent persecutions, the ordinary effect of which is to multiply protestants. Their sect grew in the midst of scaffolds and of tortures. Conde, Coligny, and his two brothers, their partisans, and all those who were tyrannised over by the Guises, embraced at the same time the protestant religion. They united with so much concert, their complaints, their vengeance, and their interests, that there was at the same time a revolution in religion, and in the state.

The first enterprize was a plot to arrest the Guises at Amboise, and to assure themselves of the person of the king. Although that plot had been woven with hardihood and conducted with secrecy, it was discovered the moment it was about being put in execution. The Guises punished the conspirators in the most cruel manner, to intimidate their enemies, and to hinder them from forming the like projects in future. More than seven hundred protestants were executed; Conde was made prisoner, and accused of treason; his trial was held, and he was condemned to death.

During the course of that trial, Anthony, king of Navarre, his brother, levied, in Guienne, at the solicitation of his wife and of Coligny, a great number of gentlemen, catholics as well as protestants, attached to his house. He traversed Gascony with his army; but upon a simple message which he received from court on the way, he dismissed them, weeping. "I must obey," said he, "but I will obtain your pardon from the king." "Go, and demand it for yourself," an old captain replied to him; "oursafety is at the end of our swords." Whereupon the nobility who followed him, returned with contempt and indignation.

Anthony continued his route and arrived at court. He there solicited for the life of his brother, not being entirely sure of his

own. He went daily to the house of the Duke and Cardinal de Guise, who received him sitting and covered, whilst he was standing and bare-headed.

All was then prepared for the death of the Prince de Conde, when the king suddenly fell sick, and died. The circumstances and the suddenness of that event, the leaning of mankind towards believing that the sudden deaths of princes are not natural, gave rise to a common rumour, that Francis II. had been poisoned.

His death gave a new turn to affairs. The Prince de Conde was set at liberty : his party commenced breathing again ; the protestant religion extended itself more and more ; the authority of the Guise bent without, in the meantime, being beaten down ; Anthony of Navarre recovered a shade of authority with which he was contented ; Mary Stuart was sent back to Scotland ; and Catherine de Medicis, who commenced then playing her first part upon the theatre, was declared regent of the kingdom, during the minority of Charles IX., her second son.

She found herself embarrassed in a labyrinth of insurmountable difficulties, and divided between two religions and different factions, which were at enmity with one another, and disputing for the sovereign power.

This princess resolved to destroy them by their own arms, if it were possible. She fed the hatred of the Condes against the Guises ; she sowed the seeds of civil wars, indifferently and impartially, between Rome and Geneva, alone jealous of her own authority.

The Guises, who were zealous catholics, because Conde and Coligny were protestants, had been for some time at the head of their troops. There had been many pitched battles ; the kingdom had been ravaged, at the same time, by three or four armies.

The Constable Anne de Montmorencis was slain at the battle

of Saint Denis, in the seventy-fourth year of his age. Francis, Duke of Guise, was assassinated by Poltrot, at the seige of Orleans. Henry III., then Duke of Anjou, a great prince in his youth, although a king of little merit in the maturity of his age, gained the battle of Jarnac against the Prince de Conde, and that of Moncontour against Coligny.

The conduct of Conde, and his unhappy death, at the battle of Jarnac, are too remarkable not to be detailed. He had been wounded in the arm two days before. Upon the point of giving battle to his enemy, he had the misfortune of receiving a kick from a fiery horse, upon which one of his officers was mounted. The prince, without showing any uneasiness, said to those who were around him: "Gentlemen, learn by this accident, that a fiery horse is more dangerous than useful in a day of battle. Come, continued he, the Prince of Conde with a mashed leg and an arm in the sling, is not afraid to give battle, since you follow him." The success did not equal his courage: he he lost the battle; all his army was put to rout. His horse having been slain under him, he held himself alone, the better to support himself, against a tree, half fainting, on account of the pain which his misfortune caused him, and ever intrepid, had turned his face towards the side of the enemy. Montesquieu, a captain of the guards of the Duke of Anjou, was passing by there when the unfortunate prince was in this state, and demanded who he was. As he was informed it was the Prince of Conde, he slew him in cold blood.

After the death of Conde, Coligny had on his arms the whole burden of the party. Jane d'Albret, then a widow, confided her son to his care. The young Henry, then aged about fourteen, went with him to the army, and partook of the fatigues of war. Toil and misfortunes were his guides and his masters.

His mother and the admiral had no other end than to render their religion, in France, independent of the church of Rome,

and to make their own authority safe against the power of Catherine de Medicis.

Catherine was already unembarrassed with many of her rivals. Francis, Duke of Guise, who was the most dangerous and the most obnoxious of all, though he was of the same party, had been assassinated before Orleans. Henry de Guise his son, who played afterwards so great a part in the world, was then very young. Charles IX., son of Catherine, had taken the direction she desired, being blindly submissive to her wishes. The Duke d'Anjou, who was afterwards Henry III., was absolutely in her interests ; she feared no other enemies than Jane d'Albret, Coligny, and the protestants. She thought that a single blow would destroy both, and render her power immutable.

She acquainted the king, and also the Duke d'Anjou with her design. All was concerted ; and the snares being prepared, an advantageous peace was proposed to the protestants. Coligny, fatigued with the civil war, accepted it with warmth. Charles, to leave no cause for suspicion, gave his sister in marriage to young Henry de Navarre. Jane d'Albret, deceived by these appearances so seducing, came to court with her son, Coligny, and all the chiefs of the protestants. The marriage was celebrated with pomp. All the obliging manners, all the assurances of friendship, all the oaths, so sacred amongst men, were lavished by Catherine and by the king. The rest of the court was occupied only with fetes, with sports and masquerades. At length, one night, which was the eve of St. Barthelemi, in the month of August, 1572, the signal was given, at midnight. All the houses of the protestants were forced and opened at once. The Admiral de Coligny, alarmed by the tumult, leaped from his couch. A troop of assassins entered his chamber ; a certain Besme, a Lorraine, who had been raised a domestic in the

house of Guise, was at their head ; he plunged his sword into the bosom of the admiral, and gave him a cut across his face.

The young Henry, Duke de Guise, who afterwards formed the catholic league, and who was afterwards assassinated at Blois, was at the door of the mansion of Coligny, awaiting the completion of the assassination, and cried out aloud : "Besme is it done ?" Immediately after, the assassins threw the body out of a window. Coligny fell and expired at the feet of Guise, who marched over his body ; not that he was intoxicated with such a catholic zeal for persecution, which in those times had infected the half of France, but that he was impelled by the spirit of vengeance, which, though it be not in general so cruel as false zeal for religion, leads often to the extremes of baseness.

Meanwhile all the friends of Coligny were attacked in Paris : men, children, all were massacred without distinction ; all the streets were strewed with dead bodies. Some priests, holding the crucifix in one hand and a sword in the other, ran at the head of these murderers, and encouraged them, in the name of God, to spare neither relations nor friends.

The Marshal de Tavannes, an ignorant and superstitious soldier, who joined the fury of religion to party rage, rushed on horseback through Paris, crying to the soldiers : "Blood, blood ; bleeding is as healthy in the month of August as in the month of May." The palace of the king was one of the principal theatres of carnage ; for the Prince of Navarre lodged at the Louvre, and all his domestics were protestants ; some of them were slain in their bed with their wives ; others fled naked, and were pursued by the soldiers, on the stairs of all the apartments of the palæe, and even to the anti-chamber of the king. The young wife of Henry of Navarre, awaked by this frightful tumult, fearing for her husband and for herself, seized with horror, and half dead, leaped hastily from her bed to go and cast herself at the feet of the king, her brother. Scarcely had she

opened the door of her chamber, when some of her protestant domestics rushed in there to take refuge. The soldiers entered after them, and pursued them in the presence of the princess. One of them, who was concealed under her couch, was there slain ; two others were pierced with the strokes of a halberd at her feet ; she was herself covered with blood.

There was a young gentleman who had been very much in the king's good graces, on account of his noble air, his politeness, and a certain happy turn which reigned in his conversation : it was the Count de Rochefoucauld, the great grandfather of the Marquis de Moutendre, who came to England during a persecution less cruel, but as unjust. La Rochefoucauld had passed the evening with the king, in a pleasant familiarity, where he had given scope to his imagination. The king felt some remorse, and was touched with a sort of compassion for him : he told him, two or three times, not to return home, and to lie in his chamber ; but la Rochefoucauld answered that he would go and find his wife. The king pressed him no more, and said : " Let him be suffered to go ; I see well that God has resolved his death." That young man was massacred two hours afterwards.

There were few who escaped that general massacre.— Amongst these the deliverance of young la Force is an illustrious example of what men call destiny. He was a child of ten years old. His father, his elder brother and himself were arrested at the same time by the soldiers of the Duke of Anjou. These murderers fell upon them all three tumultuously, and struck at them, at random. The father and the sons, covered with blood, fell one across the other. The youngest, who had not received a blow, counterfeited death ; and the day following he was delivered from all danger. A life so miraculously preserved lasted eighty-five years. This was the celebrated Marshal de la Force, uncle of the Dutchess de la Force,

who is at present in England. Meantime, many of these unfortunate victims fled to the river side. Some crossed it, swimming to gain the Faubourg Saint-Germain. The King perceived them from his window, which had a prospect over the river. What is scarcely credible, though it is but too true, he fired upon them with his carabine.

Catherine de Medicis, without uneasiness, and with a serene and tranquil air in the midst of this butchery, looked on from the height of her balcony, which had a view over the city, encouraged the assassins, and laughed at hearing the sighs of the dying, and the cries of those who were being massacred. Her maids of honour went into the street, with an effronting curiosity, worthy of the abominations of that age; they examined the naked body of a gentleman named Soubise, who had been suspected of impotency and who had happened to be assassinated under the windows of the queen.

The court, which smoked yet with the blood of the nation, attempted, some days after, to cover a crime so enormous under the formalities of the law. To justify this massacre, they falsely imputed to the admiral a conspiracy, which no person believed. They ordered a parliament to proceed against the memory of Coligny. His body was hung by the feet with an iron chain from the gibbet of Monfaucon. The king himself had the cruelty to go and enjoy that horrid spectacle. One of his courtiers, advising him to retire because the body scented badly, the king answered him: "The body of a dead enemy always smells well."

It is impossible to know whether it be true that the head of the admiral was sent to Rome. What, however, is very certain, is that there was, at Rome, a painting in which was represented the massacre of St. Barthelemi, with these words: "The Pope approves the death of Coligny." The young Henry de Navarre was rather spared through policy than compassion on

the part of Catherine, who retained him prisoner until the death of the king, to be a surety of the submission of the protestants who wished to revolt. Jane d'Albret had died suddenly three or four days before. Though perhaps her death was a natural one, it is nevertheless not a ridiculous opinion to believe that she had been poisoned.

The execution was not bounded by the city of Paris; the same orders of the court were sent to all the provincial governors in France. There were but two or three governors who refused to obey the orders of the king. One amongst others, named Montmorin, governor of Auvergne, wrote to his majesty the following letter, which deserves to be transmitted to posterity :

"Sire,—I have received an order under the seal of your majesty, to put to death all the protestants who are in my province. I respect your majesty too much not to believe these letters are suppositious; and if, (which please God may not be so,) the order has veritably emanated from it, I respect it also too much to obey it." These bore into the hearts of the protestants rage and fear. Their irreconcilable hatred seemed to take new forces: the spirit of vengeance rendered them stronger and more formidable.

A little time after, the king was attacked with a strange malady which carried him off at the end of two years. His blood was constantly boiling, and piercing through the pores of his skin: an incomprehensible disease, against which the art and skill of the physicians failed, and which was regarded as an effect of divine vengeance.

During the illness of Charles, his brother the Duke d'Anjou, had been elected king of Poland: he owed his elevation to the reputation he had required whilst a general, and which he lost on mounting the throne.

When he learned the death of his brother, he fled from Po-

land, and hastened to get into France to put himself in possession of the perilous heritage of a kingdom torn by factions, fatal to its sovereigns, and inundated with the blood of its inhabitants. He found on his arrival nothing but parties and troubles which had augmented to an infinity. Henry, then king of Navarre, put himself at the head of the protestants, and gave new life to that party. On the other hand, the young Duke de Guise began to attract the attention of all the world, by his great and dangerous qualities. He had a genius still more enterprising than his father; he seemed besides, to have a happy occasion of attaining that height of grandeur, the road to which his father had opened for him.

The Duke of Anjou, then Henry III., was regarded as incapable of having children, on account of his infirmities, which were the consequence of his debaucheries in youth. The Duke d'Alençon, who had taken the name of the Duke d'Anjou, had died in 1584, and Henry de Navarre was the legitimate heir of the crown. Guise attempted to make himself sure of him, at least after the death of Henry III., and to take it away from the house of the Capets, as the Capets had usurped over the house of Charlemagne, and as the father of Charlemagne had taken it away from his legitimate sovereign. Never did there appear so hardy a project, and one so well and happily concerted. Henry of Navarre, and all the house of Bourbon were protestants. Guise began to conciliate to himself the good will of the nation, in affecting a great zeal for the catholic religion: his liberality gained him the people; he had all the clergy at his devotion, friends in the parliament, spies at court, and servants throughout all the kingdom. His first political proceeding was an association under the name of the holy league, against the protestants, for the safety of the catholic religion.

A half of the kingdom entered with eagerness into this new confederation. The Pope, Sextus V. gave his benediction to

the league, and protected it as a new Roman militia. Philip II., king of Spain, according to the policy of sovereigns, who ever concurred in the ruin of their neighbours, encouraged the league with all his forces, with the view of breaking France in pieces, and of enriching himself with her spoils. Thus Henry III., always the enemy of the protestants, was himself betrayed by the catholics; besieged by secret and declared enemies, and inferior in authority to a subject who, submissive in appearance, was really more king than himself.

The only resource, to draw himself out of these embarrassments, was perhaps to unite himself with Henry de Navarre, whose fidelity, courage and indefatigable spirit, were the only barrier to oppose to the ambition of Guise, and who could retain in the party of the king all the protestants; which had thrown a greater weight into his scale.

The king, governed by Guise, of whom he was distrustful, though he dared not offend him, intimidated by the Pope, deceived by his counsel and bad policy, took a part directly opposite: he put himself at the head of the holy league. In the hope of rendering himself master, he united himself with Guise, his rebel subject, against his successor and his brother-in-law, whom nature and good policy designed for his ally.

Henry de Navarre commanded a little army, then in Gascony, to which place a great body of troops was coming to his assistance, on the part of the protestant princes of Germany: he was already on the borders of Lorraine. The king imagined that he could at once reduce the Navarrese, and free himself of Guise. With that design, he sent the Lorrainese a very small and very weak army against the Germans, by whom they must have been put to rout.

He made his favourite Joyeuse march, at the same time, against the Navarrese, with the flower of the French nobility, and with the most powerful army which had been seen since

Francis I. He miscarried in both his designs: Henry de Navarre entirely defeated, at Coutras, this formidable army, and Guise carried away the victory from the Germans.

The Navarrese made no other use of their victory than to offer a sure peace to the kingdom, and their assistance to the king. But, they found themselves refused; the king fearing his own subjects more than that prince.

Guise returned victorious to Paris, and was there received as the saviour of the nation. His party became more audacious, and the king more despised; so that Guise appeared rather to have triumphed over the king than the Germans.

The king, urged on all sides, awoke, but too late from his profound lethargy. He endeavoured to beat down the league: he wished to secure to himself some of the more seditious citizens: he dared to forbid Guise's entrance into Paris; but he proved at his own expense, what it is to command without power. Guise, in contempt of his orders, came to Paris; the citizens took the alarm, the guards of the king were arrested, and he himself imprisoned in his palace.

Rarely are men sufficiently good or sufficiently evil. Had Guise taken on that day, the liberty or the life of the king, he would have been the master of France; but he suffered him to escape after having beseiged him, and thus did both too much and too little. Henry III. fled to Blois, where he convoked the states-general of the kingdom. These states resemble the parliament of Great Britain, as to their convocation; but their operations are different. As they were rarely assembled, they had no rules for their government: it was in general an assembly of people, incapable, for want of experience, of knowing how to take just measures; which truly formed a great confusion.

Guise, after having chased his sovereign from his capital, dared to come and brave him at Blois in the presence of a body that represented the nation. Henry and he became reconciled

with great solemnity ; they went together to the same altar ; they communicated with each other. The one promised by an oath to forget all past injuries, the other, to be obedient and faithful in future ; while at the same time the king was laying projects to put Guise to death, and Guise, to dethrone the king.

Guise, had been sufficiently warned to distrust the king ; but he despised him too much to think him sufficiently hardy to undertake an assassination. He was the dupe of his security ; the king had resolved to avenge himself on him and his brother the Cardinal de Guise, the companion of his seditious designs, and the most hardy promoter of the league. The king himself provided poigniards, which he distributed to certain Gascons who had offered themselves to be the ministers of his vengeance. They slew Guise in the cabinet of the king : but these same men who had slain the duke, would not dip their hands in the blood of his brother, because he was a priest and a cardinal : as if the life of a man who bears a long robe and a band, was more sacred than that of a man who wears a short habit and a sword !

The king found four soldiers, who, according to the Jesuit Maimbourg, not being so scrupulous as the Gascons, slew the cardinal for a hundred crowns each. It was under the apartment of Catherine de Medicis that the two brothers were slain ; but she was perfectly ignorant of the design of her son, having then no more the confidence of either party, and being besides abandoned by the king.

If such a vengeance had been clothed with the formalities of law, which are the natural instruments of the justice of kings, or the natural veil of their iniquities, the league would have been frightened ; but wanting that solemn form, that action was regarded as a fearful assassination, and did nothing but irritate the party. The blood of the Guises fortified the league, as the death of Coligny had fortified the protestants. Many cities of France revolted openly against the king.

He came at first to Paris ; but he found the gates shut, and all the inhabitants under arms.

The famous Duke de Mayenne, younger brother of the deceased Duke de Guise, was then in Paris : he had been eclipsed by the glory of Guise during his life ; but after his death, the king found him as dangerous an enemy as his brother : he had all his great qualities, to which alone were wanting nothing but the glory and lustre.

The party of the Lorrains was very numerous in Paris. The great name of Guise, their magnificence, their liberality, their apparent zeal for the catholic religion, had rendered them the delight of the city. Priests, citizens, women, magistrates, all leagued themselves strongly with Mayenne to pursue a vengeance which appeared to them legitimate. The widow of the duke presented a petition to the parliament against the murderers of her husband. The trial commenced according to the ordinary forms of justice : two counsellors were named to file an information of the circumstance of the crime ; but the parliament went no further, the heads being singularly attached to the interests of the king.

The sorbonne did not follow that example of moderation ; seventy doctors published a writing, by which they declared Henry de Valois deprived of his right to the crown, and his subjects dispensed from their oath of fidelity. But the royal authority had not an enemy more dangerous than those citizens of Paris, named the sixteen, not on account of their number, since they were forty, but on account of the sixteen wards of Paris of which they had divided the government amongst themselves. The most considerable of all these citizens was la Clerc, who had usurped the great name of Bussi : he was a hardy citizen, but a base soldier like the rest of his companions. These sixteen had acquired an absolute authority, and became,

in the end, as insupportable to Mayenne as they had been terrible to the king.

Moreover the priests, who have ever been the trumpets of all the revolutions, thundered from the pulpit and gave assurances, on the part of God, that he who should slay the tyrant would infallibly enter into paradise. The holy and dangerous names of Jehu and of Judith, and all those assassinations consecrated by holy writ, rung throughout in the ears of the nation. In this frightful extremity, the king was, at last, forced to implore the assistance of that same Navarrese which he had before refused. That prince was more sensible to the glory of protecting his brother-in-law and his king, than to the victory which he had obtained over him.

He led his army to the king; but before his troops were arrived, he went to seek him, accompanied by a single page.—The king was astonished at this stroke of generosity, of which he himself had not at all been capable. The two kings marched towards Paris at the head of a powerful army. The city was not all in a state to defend itself. The league touched the moment of its entire ruin, when a young religieuse of the order of St. Dominic changed the whole face of affairs.

His name was James Clement; he was born in a village of Burgundy, called Sorborne, and aged at that time twenty-four years. His stern piety, and his dark and melancholy spirit, suffered themselves directly to be led away to fanaticism, by the importunate clamours of the priests. He charged himself with being the deliverer and the martyr of the holy league. He communicated his project to his friends and to his superiours: all encouraged him and canonized him in advance. Clement prepared himself for his parricide by fasts and continued prayers for whole nights; he confessed himself, received the sacraments, afterwards purchased a knife. He went to St. Cloud, where the king's quarters were, and demanded to be presented

to that prince, under the pretext of revealing to him a secret of which it was important he should be promptly informed. Having been conducted before his majesty, he prostrated himself with a modest blush on his front, and delivered to him a letter which he said had been written by Achilles de Harlay, the first president. Whilst the king was reading it, the monk struck him in the abdomen, and left the knife in the place; afterwards, with an assured look, and his hands upon his breast, he lifted his eyes to heaven, waiting peaceably the consequences of his assassination. The king rose, snatched the knife from the wound, and struck the murderer in the front. Many courtiers rushed up at the noise. Their duty demanded that they should have arrested the monk to interrogate him and to endeavour to discover his accomplices; but they slew him immediately with a precipitation which caused them to be suspected of having been but too well instructed in his design. Henry de Navarre was then king of France by right of his birth, and recognized by one part of the army, but abandoned by the other.

The Duke d'Epemon and some others quitted the army, alledging that they were too good catholics to take arms in favour of a king who would not go to mass. They hoped secretly that the overturning of the realm, the object of their desires and of their hope, would yield them the occasion of rendering themselves sovereigns in their country. Meanwhile the murder of Clement was approved at Rome, and worshipped at Paris.—The holy league recognized for their king the Cardinal de Bourbon, an old priest, uncle of Henry IV., to evidence to the world that it was not the house of Bourbon, but the heretics, whom their hatred pursued.

Thus the Duke de Mayenne was sufficiently wise not to usurp the title of king; and in the meantime he seized upon the whole royal authority, during which the unhappy Cardinal de Bourbon, called king by the league, was guarded as a prisoner by

Henry IV. the remainder of his life, which lasted two years longer. The league, supported more strongly than ever by the Pope, succoured by the Spaniards, and strong in itself, had reached the pinnacle of its greatness, and evinced for Henry IV. that hatred which false zeal inspires, and that contempt, which prosperous successes produce. Henry had but few friends, few important places, no money, and a small army ; but his courage, his activity, his policy supplied all that was wanting. He gained many battles, and amongst others that of Ivry, over the Duke de Mayenne, one of the most remarkable that had ever been fought. The two generals showed on that day all their capacity, and the soldiers all their courage. There were few faults committed on either side. Henry, at last owed his victory, to the superiority of his judgment and of his valour : but he avowed that Mayenne had fulfilled all the duties of a great general : "There is no fault to be found in him," said he, "except in the cause which he sustained."

He showed himself as moderate, after the victory, as he had been terrible in the combat. Taught that power often diminishes, when too great an extension of its use be made, and that it augments in employing it with management, he put a check to the fury of the soldiery, armed against the enemy ; he took care of the wounded, and gave liberty to many. Meanwhile so much valour and so much generosity, touched not the leaguers.

The civil wars of France had become the quarrel of all Europe. King Philip II. was actively engaged in defending the league : Queen Elizabeth gave all kinds of assistance to Henry, not because he was a protestant, but because he was the enemy of Philip, whose power it was dangerous to her to suffer to increase. She sent to Henry five thousand men, under the command of the Count d'Essex, her favourite, whose head she afterwards had taken off.

The king continued the war with various success. He

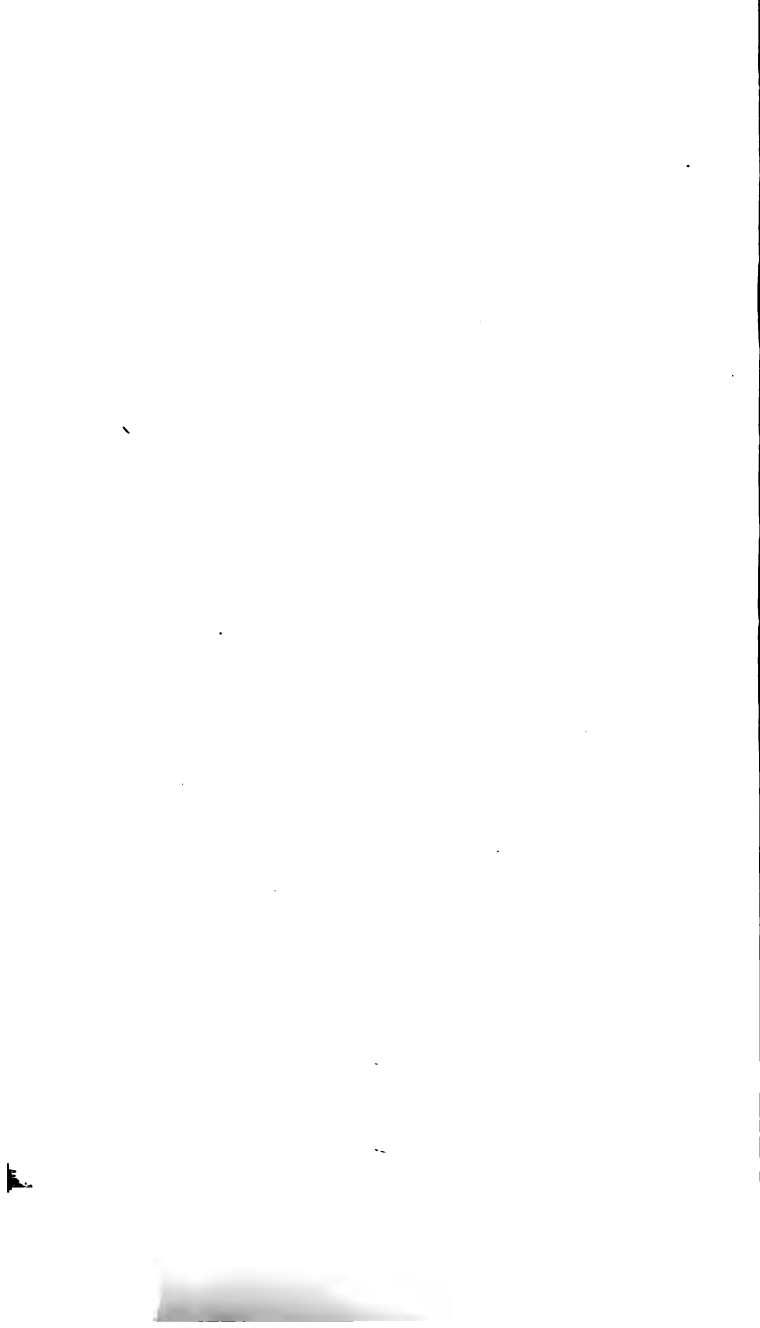
took the fauxbourgs of Paris by assault in a single day. He had perhaps taken even the city itself, had he been desirous of conquering it; but he feared to give his capital a prey to the soldiery, and to ruin a city which he wished so much to save. He besieged Paris; he raised the seige; he re-commenced it: at last he blockaded it, and cut off all communication to the city, in the hope that the Parisians would be forced by scarcity of provisions, to surrender themselves without an effusion of blood. But Mayenne, the priests, and the sixteen, wielded their spirits with so much art, envenomed them so strongly against the heretics, and filled their imagination with so much fanaticism, that they preferred rather to die with hunger than to surrender and obey.

The monks and the religious presented a spectacle, which however ridiculous in itself, was in the meanwhile a marvellous resort to animate the people. They made a kind of military review, marching in rank and file, and carrying arms, rust-covered, over their capuchins, having at their head the figure of the Virgin Mary, brandishing swords, and crying, that they were all prepared to fight and die for the defence of the faith; so that the citizens seeing their confessors armed, thought effectively of sustaining the cause of God.

Nevertheless, the scarcity degenerated into an universal famine. This prodigious number of citizens had no other nourishment than the sermons of priests, and the imaginary miracles of monks, who, by this pious artifice, had in their convents all things in abundance, whilst the whole city was upon the point of dying of hunger. The miserable Parisians, deceived, at first, by the hope of a speedy relief, sang, in the streets, ballads and satires against Henry; a folly that could be attributed to no other nation with any similitude of truth, but which is sufficiently conformable to the genius of the French, even in a state so frightful. That short and deplorable joy was forthwith en-

tirely quenched by a misery the most certain and the most astonishing : thirty thousand men died of hunger in the space of one month. The unhappy citizens, pressed by famine, attempted to make a kind of bread with the bones of the dead, which being broken and boiled, formed a sort of jelly ; but this nourishment, so little natural, served only to make them die more rapidly. It is related, and attested by the most authentic witnesses, that a woman slew and ate her own child. Finally, the inflexible obstinacy of the Parisians was equal to their misery. Henry had more compassion for their state than they themselves had ; his good nature got the victory over his private interest. He suffered his soldiers to sell privately all sorts of provisions to the city. And thus was seen to happen, what had never before been seen, that the besieged were fed by the besiegers : it was a spectacle sufficiently singular to see the soldiers, from the bottom of the trenches, sending in provisions to the citizens who threw them down money from the ramparts. Many officers, carried away by the licence so extraordinary to the soldiery, bartered spare ribs of beef for a girl ; so nothing could be seen but women descending in buckets, and buckets re-mounting, full of provisions. Thence an unreasonable licence reigned amongst the officers ; the soldiers amassed much money ; the besieged were revived ; and the king lost the city ; for at the same time an army of Spaniards came from the Low Countries. The king was obliged to raise the seige and to go and meet it through all the dangers and all the hazards of war, until, at last, the Spaniards being driven from the kingdom, he returned a third time before Paris, which was even more obstinately bent on not receiving him. In the meantime, the Cardinal de Bourbon, that phantom of a king, died. An assembly was held at Paris, who selected the states-general of the kingdom, to proceed to the election of a new king. Spain had a strong influence over these states ; Mayenne had a consi-

derable party who wished to put him on the throne. At last, Henry, fatigued by the cruel necessity of eternally making war on his subjects, and knowing, moreover, that it was not his person, but his religion which they hated, resolved to re-enter into the pale of the Roman church. A few weeks after, Paris opened its gates to him. That, which had been impossible to gain by his valour and magnanimity, he easily obtained on going to mass, and in receiving absolution from the Pope.



T H E H E N R I A D .

C A N T O F I R S T .

ARGUMENT.

Henry III., re-united to Henry de Bourbon, King of Navarre, against the league, having already commenced the blockade of Paris, sends secretly Henry de Bourbon to demand succours from Elizabeth, Queen of England.

The hero experiences a tempest. He puts into an Island, where a catholic old man predicts to him his change of religion, and his advancement to the throne. Description of England and its government.

THE HENRIAD ;

A POEM.

CANTO FIRST.

I sing the hero who o'er Gallia reign'd (*)
By right of conquest, and by right of birth ;
Who, by long evils taught, had learned to rule ;
Her factions calm'd, could conquer and forgive,
Mayenne, Iberia, and the league o'erwhelm'd,
And was his subjects' vanquisher and sire.

From heav'n descend, O truth august ! and spread
O'er all my page, thy force, thy light ; and let
The ears of kings thee learn to hear and know !
'Tis thine t' announce what they should understand :
'Tis thine t' th' eyes of nations to pourtray
Of their divisions the dire state and end.
Tell how our provinces hath discord vex'd ;
Tell of the people's woes, the princes' faults :
Come, speak ; and if of yore fair fiction knew
How with thy strains her sweeter voice to mix ;
If her soft hand thy lofty brow hath deck'd ;
Or thy light strokes made lovelier by her shade,
With me permit her in thy paths to tread,
Thy charms to adorn, embellish, not conceal.

¹ Valois yet reign'd; and his uncertain hands
Of the rent state the reins had left afloat :
The laws were forceless, rights confounded were ;
Or rather Valois truly reign'd no more.
No longer he that prince, with glory crown'd,
² For combats, from his youth, by vict'ry taught,
Whose progress Europe, tremblingly, beheld,
And who his country's sad regrets bore off,
When of the north, won by his worth supreme,
Th' astonish'd people at his feet laid down
Themselves, their sceptres, and their diadems. ³
So shone his second rank, eclips'd his first ;
From an intrepid warrior, he became
A slothful king : and dozing, on the throne,
In soft effemin'cy's bosom lull'd,
The weighty crown his feebleness o'erwhelm'd.
⁴ Quelus, St. Megrin, Joyeuse, d'Epernon,
Voluptuous youths that in his name held rule,
Corruptors crafty of an effem'nate lord,
In pleasures plung'd his languid lethargy.

Meanwhile the rapid fortune of the Guise,
On his abasement, high their grandeur rais'd ;
The rush of strangers ; all to ruin run
They formed, at Paris, that ill-omen'd league,
The prouder rival of his feeble power.
A lawless realm, subservient to the great,
In mad rebellion, from their prince withdrew
To serve those tyrants ; persecute their lord.
Forthwith abandon'd him, his friends corrupt ;
From the stunn'd Louvre him his people chas'd :

Revolted Paris saw within her walls
The rush of strangers ; all to ruin run
Till Bourbon came. ⁵ Bourbon, by zeal inspir'd,
Virtue and warlike ardour firing, came —
To his blind prince to render back the light :
His forces he re-animated, led
From shame to glory and from sports to fights,
His wand'ring footsteps, and reclaim'd his way.
Towards thy high ramparts, Paris, then advanc'd
Thy kings, in arms ; Rome view'd them with alarm ;
Spain trembling stood ; and Europe turn'd her eyes
In these reverses fam'd with interest fir'd,
Open and fix'd upon thy hapless walls.

Then might be seen, at Paris, to the fight
Inhuman discords prompting bold Mayenne,
The people, and the church, and from her towers,^(b)
Those lofty towers, invoking to her aid
The willing succours of the Spanish arms.
This sanguinary monster, rapid, firm,
Is e'er her subjects most terrific foe :
To mortal ills she limits her designs ;
Her party's blood oft crimsons o'er her hands ;
She dwells a tyrant in the hearts she tears ;
And punishes oft the crimes which she inspires.

There to the west, near to those flowery shores,
Where the Seine gliding rolls its serpent course,
From Paris flying, places charming now,
Where the arts triumph and where nature smiles ;
Then the red theatre of battling wars,
His gathering hosts th' unhappy Valois call'd—

There might be seen those heroes twain, in arms,
The proud supporters of fair France, move on,
Divided by their sect, by vengeance one.
To Bourbon's hands their fortunes they commit,
To him, who, gaining hearts, unites all wills.
One would have said the army, by him rul'd,
Had but one church, and but one chief obey'd.

From the high bosom of immortal bliss,
° Sire of the Bourbons, Louis his regards
Paternal cast below, and on him fix'd.
In him the rising splendour of his race
He presag'd saw ; his bravery whilst he lov'd,
He o'er his errors still lamenting frown'd ;
Him, with his crown about to honour, yet
A greater boon he wish'd,—enlight'ning grace.
But towards that height supreme of grandeur fast,
Henry, by paths himself knew not, advanc'd :
Louis, from heaven, afforded his support,
But hid the hand extended for his aid,
For fear that chief of victory too sure,
Should, with less danger, a less fame acquire.

Already at those ramparts 'base th' event
And chance of war had either party tried ;
Through our waste fields, already had the fiend
Of carnage borne, from sea to sea, his ire ;
When Valois thus with Bourbon held discourse,
Whilst labouring sighs broke frequent on his words :
"See'st thou how low, me, destiny hath cast !
Thine is my loss ; the hostile league, its front

Seditious, raising against me its prince,
Confounds us in its rage, pursues us both.
Paris contemns us ; for her ruler wills
Nor me who am, nor you who are to be.
(*) They know the laws ; your merit, and your blood,
After my death, all call you to that rank ;
But, dreading now your future greatness, think
You, from the throne I waver on, t' exclude.
Fatal anathemas against the dire,
The church most dreadful ' in its wrath, hath flung.
Rome who, sans soldiers, drives throughout her war,
To Spanish hands her thunder hath despatch'd :
Subjects, friends, kinsmen, all their faith have fled ;
All fly, all shun me, arm against my life,
And greedy Spaniards, by my loss enrich'd,
Come in a crowd to flood my desert fields.
Let us, in turn, against so many foes
Eager to outrage me, to France call in
Foreign assistance : England's famous queen
Secretly gain thou to espouse our cause.
Immortal hate, I know, between our realms
Permits us rarely to unite in war,
London and Paris rivals ever were ;
But since th' affronts my honour has sustain'd,
Subjects nor country have I any more.
I hate, will punish this detested race :
Who me avenges, holds in my esteem
A Frenchman's place. But I shall not employ
My secret agents usual sloth in this ;
I ask no aid but thine : 'tis thou alone
Whose voice can interest the ears of kings

In my misfortunes. Go to Albion then ;
Let thy ^(d) renown there plead in my defence,
And gain me armies. By thy arms I will
Conquer my enemies ; but I rather, now
Seek, from thy virtues, friends, my cause to aid."

He said ; the prince, who, jealous of his fame,
Fear'd to divide the honours of the field,
Listening, perceived a grief sincere arise.
Much he regretted, to his soul so dear,
Times, when with Conde solely, unsupplied ^s
With foreign succours, strong in native worth,
He shook the league. But him it now behooves
T' perform the wishes of a master's will.
Strokes of his hand, from which the foeman drank
Death, he suspended ; and upon those shores
His gather'd laurels leaving, forc'd his heart,
Reluctant thence, and parting sad, to go.
Th' ign'rant soldiery know not his design ;
And, with his coming, all their doom await.
He goes ; meantime that guilty city deems
Him always present, and, in terror, shrinks
Back from his battle swoop ; and his dread name,
The throne's strong safeguard and support, alone
Sows fear around, and battles for its lord.

(e) Now of the Neustrians had he freed the plains :
Of all his friends him Mornay sole attends,
^o Mornay his confidant, his flatterer ne'er,
Too virtuous prop of error's swerving cause ;
Who, signalizing e'er his zeal and care,

Serv'd equally his country and his church;
Censor of courtiers, yet at court belov'd;
Proud foe of Rome, and still by Rome esteem'd.

Between two rocks, where the sea bellowing roars,
And, in its rage, breaks white its foamy wave,
Dieppe's fair port attracts the hero's eye.
Eager, the sailors press upon the deck;
Under their hands, proud sovereigns of the deep,
Ready the vessels stood equipp'd to go,
Prepar'd to fly swift o'er the plains profound;
And chain'd in air, to Zephyr's gentle breath,
Impetuous Boreas yeilded up the seas.

(¹)Anchors are weighed, they start, fly far from land.
Already are the shores of England seen :
His cheerful beam the brilliant star of day
Hid at the moment and obscur'd from view.
Shrilly then blow the winds, heav'n groans, the deep
Bellows afar ; on the rough angry surge
The blasts are loos'd ; the glittering vollies flash,
Bright, through the clouds in sparkling streams and wild ;
Whose lurid flames, with the deep yawning gulfs,
To the pale mariners show death around.

▷

The hero whom the raging sea beset,
Thinks in these dangers, only on the ills
His country suffers ; turns towards her his eyes ;
And, in the musings of his anxious thought,
Seems t' accuse his destiny, in the wind.
Thus, though less generous, on the Epirian shore,

When he disputed universal sway,
To the waves trusting and the stubborn winds
The destiny of earth and that of Rome,
Pompey and Neptune being both defied,
Cæsar opposed his fortune to the storm. ¹⁰

Just at this time the universal God,
Who flies upon the winds, who swells the seas ;
The God whose power ineffable, profound,
Forms, raises, overthrows the realms of earth,
From his bright throne which lights th' empyreal heav'n,
Down on that hero deigned his eye to throw.
He himself guided him. The storm he gives
Order his bark to carry towards those shores
Nearest, where Jersey to the eye appears
Springing from forth the bosom of the waves.
There then, by heav'n conducted, stopp'd the prince.

Tranquil and sombre, near these shores, a wood,
Under cool shades, an asylum presents :
A rock, which hides it from the raging spray,
Bears off the winds that trouble its repose :
A grotto is hard by, whose simple form
Owes its adornments all to nature's hands.
A venerable old man had, far from court,
Sought a sweet peace in this obscure abode.
Unknown to man, from vexing passions free,
There by himself he pass'd his studious hours,
There he regretted, sad, those useful days
In pleasures plung'd, or lost in faithless love.
There on th' enamell'd turf, or at the stream

Of fountains pure, trod underneath his feet
The human passions : and, with tranquil breast,
Waited, of his desires the end, when death
Should call him willing to rejoin his God.
That God whom he ador'd his age maintain'd :
High wisdom sent to cheer his desert cell,
And prodigal to him of sacred lore,
Op'd the bright pages of the book of fate.

This ancient sire, whom God had taught to know
The hero, him to th' fount's margin brought,
And offer'd to his taste his rural feast.
The prince to such repasts accustom'd was
For, charm'd beneath the lab'rer's humble shed,
Flying the noise of courts, himself to seek,
Oft the crown's grandeur had he laid aside.
The troubles spread through christendom became
The fruitful theme and subject of converse.
Mornay, who in his creed was ever firm,
To calvanism lent a strong support ;
Henry yet doubted, and of heaven desir'd
A ray of light to undeceive his eyes.
" Ever, said he, has sacred truth in clouds
Of error, been, from feeble mortals, hid :
Ah must it be the paths which lead to God,
Whose will I seek, that I must never know !
Alas a God so good, the lord of man,
Would have been serv'd, had he but will'd to be."

" God's vast designs," the ancient sire replied,
" Let us adore ; nor wrongfully accuse

Him of the faults humanity commits.

I saw of calvanism the birth in France ;

Low, at his birth, weak, marching in the shade,

I saw her, aidless, exile in our walls, .

Herself advancing on, with timid steps,

By many a winding dark ; my eyes at length

High, from the bosom of the dust, have seen

This frightful phantom rear his lofty head,

And sitting on throne, insulting man,

Our altars, with disdainful foot, o'eturn.

Far then from court in this obscure retreat,

Of my religion I the abuse deplore.

Here, hope, at least, my last days flatters still

That this new worship shall not ever last.

From the caprice of man it had its birth ;

We, as we saw it born, shall see it die :

The works of man are fragile as themselves.

Their factious aims God scatters, at his will :

Himself is always stable ; and whilst earth

Sees of her countless sects the ruthless war,

Bright truth reposes at th' Eternal's feet.

Rarely proud mortal hath her light illum'd.

He her shall one day know who seeks her right.

Since 'tis thy wish, thou shalt enlighten'd be.

God thee hath chosen : and through wars, his hand

Thy steps to Valois' throne is leading up.

Victory, already hath his voice ordain'd

For you, the paths of glory to prepare.

But, if his truth enlighten not thy soul,

Hope not an entrance into Paris' walls

But, above all, shun thou th' enfeebling flame

Of mightiest bosoms ; shun th' enchantress bait
Of a sweet poison ; chiefly fear thyself,
Thy headlong passions ; learn one day t' avoid
Pleasures' enticements and to conquer love.
Then, when, by strenuous effort, you at last
Shall o'er the leaguers and yourself have gain'd
Conquest most glorious, and triumph high ;
When in a horrid seige, which fame shall keep,
An astonish'd people by thy grace shall live,
Then shall the miseries of thy kingdom cease ;
Then shalt thou lift thine eyes t' adore the God
Thy fathers worshipp'd ; then shalt thou perceive
An upright heart may ever trust in him.
Go ! who resembles him, his aid shall have.

Each word he spake appear'd a flaming dart,
Which penetrated Henry's inmost soul.
Himself he thought transported to those times
When God, in mercy, talk'd with mortal man ;
When virtue pure, of wond'rous gifts diffuse,
Commanded king's, and oracles inspir'd.

(^h)Regretful then that virtuous sage he felt,
Embracing him, with tears his eyes ran o'er ;
And, at the moment, of that day perceived
The dawn which yet for him no brilliance shed.
Mornay appear'd surpriz'd, but nothing mov'd :
God, master of his gifts, lay hid from him.
Vainly on earth had he the name of sage ;
Midst all his virtues error was his lot.

Whilst the old man, instructed by the Lord,
Talk'd with the prince, and spake unto his heart,
Th' impetuous winds grew silent at his voice ;
The sun shone forth ; the waves in silence lay.
Bourbon he then conducted to the shore :
The hero goes, and flies to Albion's plains.

England beholding, he admires the change,
In secret, blest, of that puissant realm,
Where the abuse eternal of wise laws
Their kings their people's sorrow long had caus'd.
Upon whose bloody theatre had died
A hundred heroes, from whose slippery throne
A hundred kings had bow'd the head in death.
A woman, chaining at her feet, their fates,
Astonish'd mortals with her glorious reign.
This was Elizabeth ; whose prudent sway
Held, at her will the scale of Europe's fate ;
And made her yoke to th' unruly, English dear,
Who ne'er could serve, nor yet in freedom live.
Under her reign their losses are forgot ;
Their fruitful plains with flocks are cover'd o'er ;
Their fields with crops, the ocean with their sails :
Kings are they on the wave, and fear'd on land ;
Neptune, assisting their imperial fleet,
Fortune invokes from earth's remotest bounds :
London, once barb'rous, is of arts the seat,
The warehouse of the world, the fane of Mars.
There in the walls of Westminster may be seen, ¹¹
For the link admir'ble that theme combines,
Three mighty powers in awful state convene,

The peoples' deputies, the lords, the king,
Whom int'rest sep'rates, but whom law unites ;
All three, of that inviolable corps
The sacred members ; each unto themselves
Dang'rous, and terr'ble to their neighbours are.
Blest, when the people, in their duty taught,
The sovereign power, as they ought, revere !
Still happier when their king, mild, just, and sage,
The public freedom, as he ought, respects !
Ah ! exclaim'd Bourbon, when like you again
Glory with peace shall Frenchmen re-unite ?
What an example, monarchs of the earth !
A woman here hath shut the gates of war ;
Horror and discord whilst she sends to you,
Her blessings show'rs o'er an adoring realm.

Meantimes he to that mighty city comes,
Where freedom sole abundance entertains.
Of England's conqueror the tow'r he sees. ¹³
Next of Elizabeth th' august abode.
Follow'd by Mornay, sole, the queen he seeks,
Sans equipage, or noise, or that vain pomp
With which the great, where'er they are, are charm'd,
But which true heroes with contempt regard.
He speaks ; his frankness forms his eloquence :
In secret he the needs of France explains ;
And whilst in suppliance he bends his heart,
In his submissions shows his lofty soul.

"What, serv'st thou Valois !" said the Queen surpris'd :
"His envoy, com'st thou to the banks of Thames !

What, the protector of his foes become,
Comes Henry, for his persecutors, aid
From me to ask ! From the far western shores
To where Aurora opes the gates of light,
Of your long quarrels doth the world yet speak ;
And do I see thee lift in Valois' aid
That arm, that self same arm, so oft his dread !"

"Our hate," said he, "have his misfortunes quench'd.
Valois a slave was ; now his chains he breaks.
Happier, if, ever of my faith assur'd,
He only from his courage and from me
Had sought support ! but he alas employ'd
Of craft too much and practis'd in disguise , ⁽ⁱ⁾
My foe was he through weakness and through fear.
His danger viewing I forgot his fault ;
Him have I conquer'd, him will I avenge.
Thou can'st, great queen, in this most righteous war,
The name of England ever signalize,
Crown all thy virtues by our rights' defence,
Revenge with me the quarrel of all kings."

Impatient then Elizabeth demands
A full recital of the woes of France,
Wishes to know what causes and what links
In Paris had so great a change produc'd.
"Already," said she to the king, "hath Fame
Oft, prompt, inform'd me of those bloody ills ;
But her mouth, in its lightness indiscreet,
Lavishes e'er fiction with its truth.
I have rejected ever such loose tales.

Thou then, fam'd witness of these quarrels long,
Thou, of Valois e'er vanquisher or aid,
Do thou explain the knot which binds you now.
Deign to develope thou this change extreme :
Worthy thyself, thou sole hast power to speak.
Paint me thy ills, and thy more blest exploits.
Think that thy life a lesson is for kings."

" Ah!" replied Bourbon, " must my mem'ry then
Recall th' unhappy hist'ry of those times !
Would to vex'd heav'n, the witness of my woes,
That an oblivion endless might conceal
Rather so many horrors from our eyes !
Why dost thou ask me that my tongue should tell
Of princes of my blood the rage and shame ?
My heart yet shudders with remembrance sole :
But thou ordain'st it and I thee obey.
Another, speaking to you, might, with skill,
Disguise their crimes, excuse their weaknesses :
But for my heart an artifice so vain
Is little made ; and I must rather speak
Here with a soldier's than an envoy's tongue."

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.

ARGUMENT.

Henry the Great recounts to Queen Elizabeth the history of the misfortunes of France: he recounts their origin, and enters into the detail of the massacres of St. Barthelemi.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO SECOND.

¹ "O queen, th' excess of ills whence France is freed,
Is much more frightful than its source is pure :
Religion was it whose inhuman zeal
The war-steel put in every Frenchman's hand.
Rome and Geneva ! I do not decide ²
Between them. By whatever name, divine,
Call'd of their party, I myself have seen
Of both sides the imposture and the rage ;
And, if of error perfidy's the child,
If, in the variances where Europe's plung'd,
Treach'ry or murder of untruth's the seal,
Both parties then are equally unjust,
Alike in blindness and alike in crime.
I, who embrace the states defence, have left
Ever to heaven the care of its revenge ;
Ne'er was I seen, o'erstretching my own pow'r,
With unwise hand the censer to profane :
And may that frightful pol'cy perish e'er
Which o'er all hearts asserts despotic rule ;
Which, sword in hand, wills mortals to convert,
Which with the blood of heretics distains

Its gloomy altars, and with zeal untrue
Or int'rest for its guides goes blindly on
And serves a God by sacrificing man !

Would to the pow'rful God, whose will I seek,
The Valois' court had ever thought like me !
But much less scruple either Guise possess'd :³
Ambitious chiefs of a too cred'lous realm,
Covering with heavens' interest their own,
They a mad people to the snare have led
Its cruel piety, against me arm'd.
Our citizens have I beheld, inspir'd
With furious zeal, to mutual slaughter rush,
For arg'ments vain they did understand.

You know the people, what they dare you know,
When, their king to avenge heav'ns' cause outrag'd,
Religion's veil around their eyes dispos'd,
Tumultuous they submission's rein have burst.
You know them, madam, and your prescience wise
Smother'd long time that evil in its birth.
Scarce was that whirlwind in your kingdom form'd;
Your cares foresaw it, and your virtues calm'd :
You reign ; fair London's free ; your laws prevail.⁴
But different routes hath Medicis pursued.
Perhaps, effected by these tales of grief,
Of me you ask what Medicis hath been.
It shalt thou learn from an ingenious mouth.
Much have they spoken ; little, rightly, known :
Of her deep heart the windings few have prob'd.
As for myself, by twenty years of youth

In her sons' court for education kept,
I, who for twenty years have seen arise,
Under her steps, the tempest and the storm,
Have, at my peril, learnt to know her well.

Her spouse, expiring in his flowery days,
To her ambition left an open course.
Under her guardianship brought up, each son
Because he reign'd without her, was her foe.
With dire confusion, round about the throne,
Jealousy and division sow'd her hands:
Opposing, ceaseless, with but too much skill,
° Guises to Condes, France to France's self;
Always prepar'd to coalesce with foes,
And chang'd by int'rest, rivalry, or friends;
⁷ Slave of her pleasures, of ambition less;
Though superstitious, to her sect untrue; °
° Possessing, in a word, to say no more,
With but few virtues, all her sex's faults.

My frankness pardon; me that word escap'd:
Yet in that sex thou'rt not at all compris'd;
Th' august Elizabeth hath nought but charms:
Heav'n, which thee form'd o'er states to hold controul,
What man may be, hath giv'n us thee to show;
And Europe ranks thee midst her first of men.

Already had the second Francis join'd
In the low tomb his sire, by sudden fate;
Weak child, who Guises caprices ador'd,
Whose virtues and whose vices are unknown.

Charles, younger still, possess'd the name of king :
Med'cis reign'd sole ; beneath her law all shook.
Strength'ning her pow'r, her policy at first,
Seem'd to eternize a son's docile youth,
Her hand, the torch of discord lighting up,
By blood her recent empire signaliz'd ;
She arm'd the wrath of the two rival sects.
Dreux, ¹⁰ who their fatal ensigns saw display'd
Was the dread the'tre of their first exploits.
Near the kings' tombs, Montmorenci the ag'd, ¹¹
Struck by some warrior hand, with mortal shot,
Of lengthen'd labours finish'd the career.
Guise, ¹² at Orleans assassinated, died.
My hapless father, ¹³ at the court enchain'd,
'Too weak, and serving 'gainst his will the queen,
Drew, 'midst affronts, his wav'ring fortunes on ;
And, e'er preparing for himself his ills,
Fought, for his persecutors fought, and died.
Conde, ¹⁴ who saw a brother's only son
In me, adopted me, was tutor, sire ;
His camp my cradle was ; midst warriors there,
Nourish'd in labour, under laurel shades,
With him disdaining the courts' listless ease,
My sports of youth his combats sole have been.

Oh plains of Jarnac ! O inhuman blow !
Barb'rous Montesquiou, less than warrior thou !
Rather assassin ! under thy dire rage,
Conde, already dying, helpless, fell.
I saw the blow ; I saw him reft of life ;
Alas ! too young, my arm, my feeble arm
Could nor prevent, nor yet avenge his death.

Heav'n, which the weakness of my years preserv'd,
Ever to heroes did my youth confide.
Coligny, 'worthy Conde to succeed, ¹⁵
Became defender of our cause, of me.
I owe him all things, Madam, I avow ;
If for some virtue Europe me applauds,
If Rome, hath oft, moreo'er, esteemed my deeds,
To thee, illustrious shade, to thee 'tis due !

I grew beneath his eyes ; and long of war
My youthful courage the hard service knew.
He the heroic art by precept taught :
Blanch'd with his toils, that warrior I beheld,
The weight sustaining of the common cause,
Both against Medicis and fortune's force ;
Lov'd by his party, by his foes esteem'd,
Sometimes unfortunate, yet dreaded e'er ;
Skill'd in the combat, skill'd in the retreat ;
More great, more glorious, in defeat more fear'd,
Than Dunois or than Gaston ever were
In the proud course of their prosperity.
After six years of loss and of success,
Medicis, who our fields yet cover'd saw
Still with a force renew'd she thought destroy'd,
Of combats and of fruitless conquests tir'd,
Wish'd, without trying further efforts vain,
By one sole blow the civil broils to end.
Towards us the court its charms of favour held ;
And, us to conquer failing, gave us peace.
Oh what a peace ! just God, I thee attest
Thou God of vengeance ! one that steep'd in blood

And its ill omen'd olive dipp'd in gore.
 Heav'ns ! must we see the masters of mankind
 Thus for their subjects clear the paths of crime !

‡

Coligny, faithful to his prince, at heart,
 Fighting against her, ever France lov'd well :
 He cherish'd, he foresaw th' occasion blest
 Which seem'd t' assure the union of the state.
 Rarely the hero bears distrustful heart.
 Full of assurance, 'midst his foes he came :
 Ev'n to the Louvre's centre led my steps.
 Medicis, me, weeping, in her arms receiv'd,
 Lavish'd long time, on me a mother's love,
 Assur'd Coligny of a friendship true.
 By his advice, henceforth, she would be rul'd ;
 Him deck'd with honours, loaded him with gifts,
 Show'd all my friends, by hope deceiv'd, seduc'd,
 The flattering signs of favours from her son,
 Alas ! we hop'd enjoyment longer time !

Perfidious presents these some deem'd indeed :
 To them too fearful seem'd a foeman's gifts.
 For more distrust, the more the king could feign.
 In secret shades, but lately, Medicis ¹⁶
 For perjury, for deceit had formed her son,
 Fashion'd for crimes his young and pliant heart,
 And, for her lessons apt, th' unhappy prince,
 By his wild will to follow them arous'd,
 Had too well profited in her guilty school.

In fine, that horr'ble myst'ry to conceal,
 The better, he his sister to me gave, ¹⁷

Me call'd his brother. O thou name ! how much
Hast thou deceiv'd me ! empty oaths ! rash tie !
¹⁸ Hymen, that of our ills the first sign gave !
Thy torches, which the wrath of heav'n allum'd
Shone on my eyes to show a mothers' death.
Unjust I am not, nor do I pretend ¹⁹
To Medicis still t' impute her death : I throw
Suspicion to the winds perhaps though just,
For her to search for crimes I have no need.
My mother died. O thou these tears forgive,
Which from my grief, soft recollection draws.
Meanwhile already is, the hour arriv'd
Kept by the queen for that catastrophe.

Given without tumult, noiseless, was the sign :
Favour'd and cover'd by the shades of night.
Th' unequal courier of that hapless month ²⁰
His tremb'ling light, through fear, appear'd to hide.
Soft in the arms of sleep Coligny lay,
Deceitful round repose her poppies spread ;
Quick of a thousand cries th' astounding noise
His senses comes from this fair calm to snatch :
He rises, looks around, on all sides sees
Assasins rushing with precip'tate steps :
Torches and arms he sees on all sides flash,
His palace fir'd, a people all alarm'd,
His bloody servants smother'd in the flame ;
In crowds the murd'rers, for the carnage warm,
With loud voice crying : " let no one escape
'Tis God, 'tis Medicis, the *king ordains !*"
He hears the name of Coligny resound.

Young Teligny he, at a distance, sees ²¹
Teligny, who had merited his child,
His party's hope, the honour of his house,
Who bleeding, mangled, by the soldiers dragg'd,
Demands his vengeance with extended arms.

The hapless chief, without defence or arms,
Seeing his death, and death without revenge,
Wish'd to expire at least as he had liv'd,
With all his glory, all his virtue still.

Already of the assassins a throng'd band
Were near to break the door of the saloon
That shut him in ; he opens it to them,
Himself he shows unto the wond'ring eyes,
With that calm look, that majesty of front,
As when in combats of his courage lord,
Tranquil he chid or press'd the battle storm.

At the aspect august, that reverend air,
The murderers, with respect, surpriz'd, are seiz'd ;
An unknown power suspended all their rage.
"Comrades," says he, "come execute your work ;
In my cold blood distain these hoary hairs
Which forty years the battles' fate hath spar'd ;
Strike, nothing fear : Coligny pardons you ;
Small is my life, to you I yield it up,
In fighting for you rather had I died."
The tigers, at these words, sink on their knees :
With terror seiz'd, with dread, one drops his arms ;
His feet the other, clasping, bathes in tears ;

And this great man, by murd'ers compass'd round,
Seem'd like a king whom subjects round ador'd.

Besme, who in the hall of his victim staid,
Mounts, rushes, angry that the crime's delay'd ;
The assassins' tardy blows he wants to haste ;
He sees them trembling at the hero's feet.
He, sole unmov'd that touching object views ;
He, inaccessible to pity e'er,
Crime would have thought it, Medicis to betray,
With least remorse had he himself felt touch'd.
Acrost those soldiers rapidly he runs :
Coligny him with visage firm awaits :
And straight that furious monster in his side
Plunges his sword, but with averted eyes,
Fearful that august visage, by a glance,
His arm should palsy, and his courage freeze.

Such of the greatest Frenchman was the fate.
Insult was added, outrage after death. ²³
His corpse, all wounds, of burial depriv'd,
Of ravenous birds became the unworthy food ;
And e'en his head to Medicis' feet was borne,
Spoils worthy her, and worthy of her son.
It Medicis with indifference receiv'd,
Nor seem'd this fruit of vengeance to enjoy,
Remorseless, pleasureless, her mind unmov'd,
And as to presents similar quite us'd.

Who can the ravages, meanwhile, express
Whose images this cruel night display'd ?

Coligny's death, of horrors the first fruits,
Was but an essay weak of all their rage.
A people of assassins, lawless troops,
By duty and by zeal to carnage fir'd,
March'd, sword in hand, fire flashing from their eyes,
O'er the strown bodies of our brethren slain.
²⁴ With wrath o'erboiling, Guise was at their head,
And on my friends aveng'd his father's shade :
Poignard in hand, Nevers, ²⁵ Gondi, ²⁶ Tavanne, ²⁷
Stirr'd up the rage of their inhuman zeal ;
Before them bore a schedule of their crimes,
To murder led them, and their prey mark'd out.

I shall not paint the tumult and the cries ;
The blood at Paris, gushing on all sides ;
The son upon the father's body slain,
Brother and sister, mother with her child,
Husbands expiring 'neath their burning roofs,
Encradled children by the stone-work crush'd :
'Tis from man's fury what we must expect.
But what posterity would hardly think,
That which e'en you can scarcely now believe,
These furious monsters, thirsting still for gore,
Mov'd by the voice of sanguinary priests,
Butch'ring their brethren, yet invok'd the Lord,
And, with the blood of innocents distain'd,
That execrable praise dar'd offer God.

O basely there how many heroes died !

²⁸ Renel and Pardaillan sank down in death ;

²⁹ And thou, brave Guerchy ; thou, sage Laverdine,

Worthy of lengthier life and different fate.
Amongst the hapless, whom that cruel night
Plung'd in the horrors of eternal gloom,
Marsillac and Soubise, ³⁰ to death condemn'd,
Their days unfortunate awhile defend.
Them bleeding, pierc'd with wounds, scarce drawing breath,
Ey'n to the Louvre's gates they push, they drag ;
That odious palace with their blood they stain,
Their king imploring, who them both betray'd.

Rousing the tempest from that palace top,
Med'cis, at leisure, on that fest'val gaz'd :
Her cruel fav'rites, with a curious ken,
Under their eyes the waves of blood saw flow ;
And the sad wrecks of Paris blazing high
Were of these heroes the triumphal pomp.

What say I ! O the crime, shame, height of ills !
The king, ³¹ amidst those butchers, the king's self,
Following the wand'ring troops of the proscrib'd,
His sacred hands soil'd with his subjects' blood :
And that same Valois, whom to day I serve, ³²
That king, who by my mouth your aid implores,
Partaking of his barb'rous brother's crimes
Unto that shameful carnage rous'd his wrath.
A harden'd heart yet not that Valois had ;
Since rarely he in blood his hands hath dipp'd :
But his youth crime's examples hard beset ;
And even a weakness was his cruelty.

Some, it is true, from 'midst the crowd of dead,
Escap'd the efforts of th' assassins steel.
Of ³³ Caumont, youthful boy, th' adventure strange,
From mouth to mouth, to future times will go.
Bent with the load of years, his aged sire,
Yielded, between his children twain, to sleep ;
One single couch the sons both held and sire.
The eager murd'ers, whom their rage made blind,
With hasty strokes, at them the poignard plunge :
Death, o'er that hapless couch, at hazard, flies.

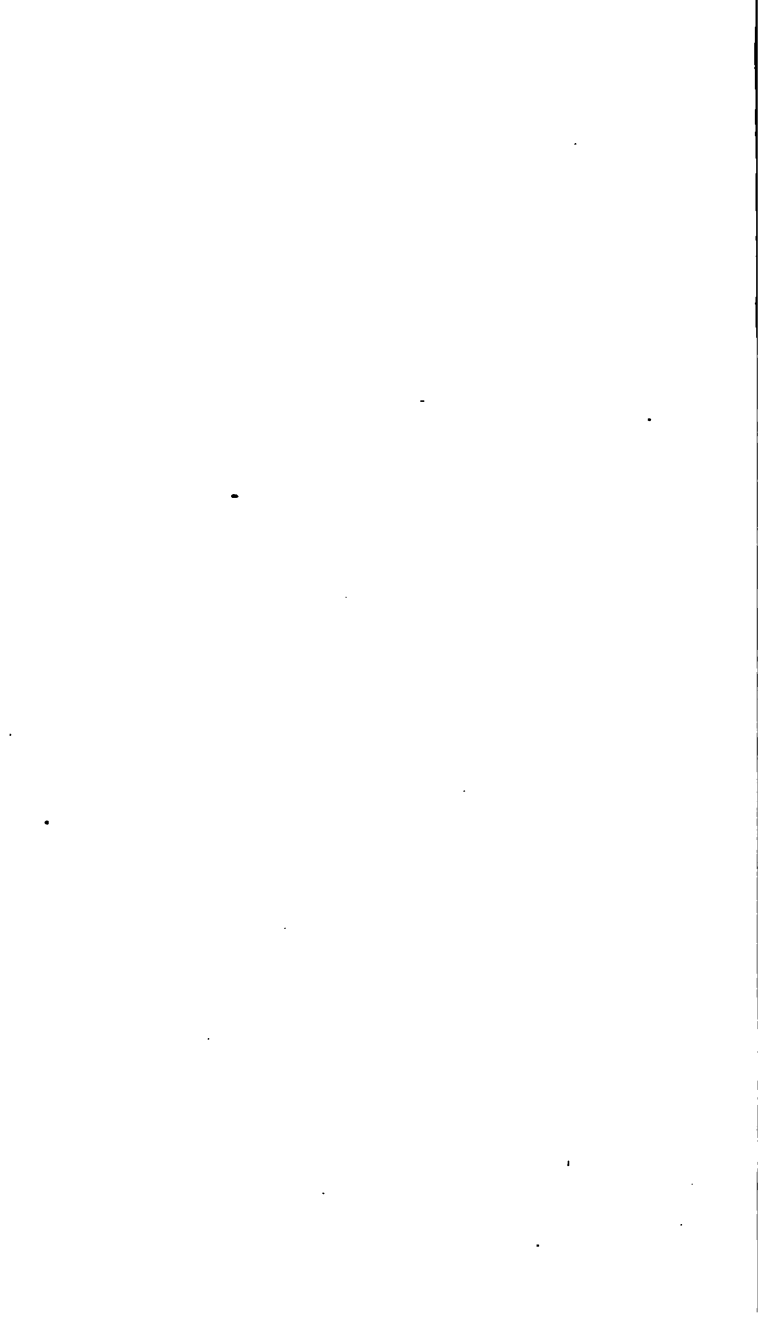
Our fates th' Eternal, in his hands, sole, holds :
He o'er our years knows how, when good, to watch,
Whilst, in his rage, the homicide's deceiv'd.
With neither blow nor stroke was Caumont struck :
A hand invis'ble, arm'd in his defence,
Away his youth stole, from the murd'ers hands ;
His sire, beside him dying with many a blow,
Him with his expiring body wholly hid ;
Cheating a barb'rous people and their king,
Life he afforded him, a second time.

Meanwhile, what did I, in these frightful hours ?
Ah ! by the faith of oaths too much assur'd,
Calm, in mid Louvre, far from noise of arms,
The charms of sweet repose I yet enjoy'd.
O night ! Oh frightful night ! Oh fatal sleep !
Death's preparation on my 'wakening shone.
My dearest friends the massacre had reach'd,
Faithful domestics ; on all sides around
My porticoes inundate, were, with blood ;

And my eyes open'd, but to there behold,
Them, my friends ready on the floor to slay.
The blood-stain'd butchers towards my couch advanc'd,
Their parricidal hands before me rais'd ;
I touch'd the moment when my life might end ;
My head I offer'd and I waited death.

But, whether for their masters' blood, respect
For me yet spake within their traitor hearts ;
Or that th' ingenious rage of Medicis
Death, for me, found a punishment too sweet ;
Or that in fine, a heaven making sure,
An hostage me her prudent fury kept ;
For new misfortunes was my life reserv'd ;
And me, forthwith chains, from her side, they brought. ³⁴

Happier Coligny, to be envied more,
At least, life only he in falling lost ;
Him freedom, glory follow'd to the tomb.
You shudder, madam, at this frightful tale :
Such horrors shock you ; but I have not told
The smallest part of their barbarity.
One might have said that, from the Louvre's height,
Medicis to France the signal had sent forth,
Paris all invited ; ³⁵ in a moment, death,
Without resistance, France's face o'erspread.
When crime a king wills he is soon obey'd !
A hundred thousand murd'ers serv'd his rage ;
And of the streams of France the blood-stain'd waves
Bore but dead bodies to th' affrighted seas."



THE HENRIAD.

CANTO THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

The hero continues the history of the civil wars of France. Unhappy death of Charles IX. Reign of Henry III. His character. That of the famous Duke of Guise, known under the name of Balafre. (gash.) Battle of Coutras. Murder of the Duke of Guise. Extremities to which Henry II. is reduced. Mayenne is the chief of the league. D'Aumale is the hero. Reconciliation of Henry III. and of Henry king of Navarre. Succours which Queen Elizabeth promises. Her answer to Henry de Bourbon.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO THIRD.

When, for some days, stern destiny's decree,
To cruelties thus great free course had giv'n,
And of th' assassins, with their crimes fatigued,
The blunted knives lack'd victims for their ire,
The people, whom the queen herself had arm'd,
Open'd, at last their eyes, and saw her aims.
Easily its pity to its rage succeeds :
Its country's voice loud groaning round it heard.
Charles, very soon was horror-struck, himself ;
And keen remorse rose biting in his heart.
Th' unhappy culture of the king's first years
Had nature's pow'rs in him but too much marr'd ;
But had not wholly stifled that still voice
Which kings themselves, upon their thrones, alarms.
Rear'd by his mother, in her maxims taught,
Like her, he was not harden'd in his crimes.
To blast his flowery youth deep chagrin came ;
A mortal languor seem'd its course t' abridge :
God, vengeance on him showing, most severe,
Him dying, with his seal of wrath, imprest,
And by his chastisement, he will'd t' alarm

Whoe'er in future dare him imitate.
I saw him dying.¹ Ah! that fearful sight
Before my affected eyes seems present still.
His blood, in bubbles, boiling through his skin.
Aveng'd the French blood by his orders shed;
Himself he felt struck by a hand unseen;
And at that terrible end amaz'd, his realm
Wept for a king so young, so soon cut down;
A king, by villians, hurried into crime,
And whose repentance promis'd unto France
Of a mild future reign some feeble hope,

Quick, on that death's report, from the mid-north,
With rapid steps th' impatient Valois came
Upon these seats to seize, yet warm with gore,
A hapless brother's bloody heritage.

² Poland had, at that time, with common choice,
In the rank of Jagellons favour'd Valois plac'd;
His name, more fear'd than the most powerful kings',
The voice of five score provinces had gain'd.
What weight so heavy as a famous name!
Nor could Valois that dangerous burden bear.
Let him not think I shall his faults defend:
For him I can my ease, my life destroy;
All things but truth which I prefer to him.
I pity, blame him, and am yet his aid.

Like a light shade his glory had pass'd off;
That change is great, but it is common too:
More than one king we've seen, by sad decline,

Victor in combats, at his court a slave.
'Tis in the soul, O queen, true courage shines.
Virtues Valois from heaven receiv'd in part.
Though brave, yet feeble, soldier, but no king,
He firmness hath in battle hour alone.
His shameless fav'rites, flattering his neglect,
Rul'd his inconstancy of heart, at will ;
Deep in his palace, they with him enclos'd,
Deaf to the cries his realm oppress sent forth.
Their fatal wills dictated, by his voice,
Of France's treasures spent the residue ;
And sending forth rain sighs, the realm oppress,
Groan'd for their lux'ry, and their sports defray'd.

Whilst, 'neath the yoke of avaricious lords,
Valois the state with subsidies oppress,
Guise was seen rising ; ³ and the inconstant mob
Their eyes forthwith turn'd towards that glitt'ring star.
His valour, exploits, and his father's fame,
His beauty, grace, that happy gift to please
Which knows than virtue better how to rule,
To reign o'er hearts, towards him all wishes drew,
Victors triumphant, by their pow'rful charms.

Seduction's mighty art none better knew ;
None o'er his passions greater rule e'er had,
Or, with externals false, could better hide
Of mightiest projects the vast shady depths :
Proud, haughty, but yet pliant, popular,
In public, he the people's misery wept,
The rigorous weight of imposts he abhor'd ;

The poor man saw him, and came blest away :
Of timid indigence he well knew how
T' anticipate the wants, his benefits,
At Paris, e'er his presence lov'd announc'd;
Lords, whom he hated, him he caus'd to love;
Without a change, terr'ble in his offence;
Rash in his wishes, subtle in his craft,
Brilliant in virtues, and in vices too;
Knowing the danger, and yet fearing nought;
Great prince, bold warrior, and bad citizen.

When for some time he had his pow'r essay'd,
And the blind peoples' wav'ring thought to fix,
No more he hid himself, but, open came,
Of his king's throne the basement to break up.
He form'd at Paris that unhappy league
Which all the rest of France infected soon;
Dread monster, nourish'd by the lords and realm,
Fertile in tyrants, and with slaughter fat.

France, in her bosom, then two monarchs saw :
Nought but the friv'lous trappings one possess;
Inspiring round, the other, hope or fear,
Scarce needed the vain title of a king.

From dissipation's bosom Valois wak'd.
The preparation, danger, noise which press
Him, for a moment open'd his dull eyes :
But of the troublous day, his dazzled sight
Discern'd not, in the tempest depths, the bolts
Of threat'ning thunder rolling o'er his head :

And, with a moment's wakefulness fatigued,
Tir'd, in the arms of sleep himself he threw,
Amongst his fav'rites and amidst delights,
Tranquil, and slept upon the yawning gulf.

I, sole, remain'd him ; and, near perishing,
But me, none had he who could succour bring :
Heir, after him, of France's throne, my hand
Arm'd, without balancing, in his defence :
I to his weakness offer'd needful aid ;
And ran to save him, or with him to die.

But Guise too active, in destruction skill'd,
Thought by the one, the other to destroy.
What say I ? Valois he compell'd to lose
The only aid which could him safety yield.
Religion's ordinary pretext made
For that dread plot an honourable veil,
By it feign'd virtue, all the people warm'd,
Their rage, yet illy quench'd, renew'd
The worship of their sires he call'd to mind,
The late attempts of these strange sects, he nam'd,
The church's foe me painted, and their gods :
" He spreads," says he, " his errors every where ;
Elizabeth's sad examples he pursues ;
On your raz'd temples will he found his own ;
You his conventicles in Paris see." ⁴
The people trembling for their altars stood
At this discourse. The alarm, direct, is borne
To the king's palace. Thither, quick, the league,
Which feign'd itself affrighted, to the king

Came, on the part of Rome t' announce that she
Union to him, fore'er forbad with me.

Alas ! the king, too weak, obey'd, nor sigh'd :
And when, his injury t' avenge, I flew,
I learn'd my brother to the league submit,
Had with his enemies, me join'd to crush ;
Maugre his will, o'erspread the land with arms,
And against me, through fear, declar'd his war.

I mourn'd his weakness ; and regardless still,
I rush'd to fight, instead of 'venging him.
In many a place, the cities of the league,
Through France, alarm'd, against me sent their bands :
Joyeuse, with ardour, swooping on me, came,
Of his king's weaknesses the agent rash.
Courage and prudence, Guise, who equal had
My friends dispers'd, their passage to me clos'd.
With arms and enemies, from all parts, press'd,
All I defied, all hazards-tempting stood.

That haughty Joyeuse I at Coutras sought. "
His overthrow thou know'st, his hapless end ;
I the recital useless must thee spare."

" No ! your refusal," said the queen august, (*)
" Receive, I cannot, modest tho' it be :
Of a recital, no ! deprive me not
Which as much interest as instruction yields ;
Do not that day, great Coutras' day forget,
Your toils, your virtues, Joyeuse and his death.
The author of such great exploits to me

Must sole be worthy of relating them,
And worthy I perhaps to hear them told.”
She said. The hero, at these flattering words,
His front felt cover'd with a noble blush ;
At last reduc'd, regretfully, to speak
Of his own glory, he resum'd discourse,
And thus that fatal history pursued.

“Of all the fav'rites whom Valois ador'd,
Who his faults flatter'd and who gave him laws,
Born of a blood amongst the French renown'd,
Joyeuse was less unworthy his high fate :^o
Virtues he had ; and of his flowery days
Had fate not in that combat stopp'd the course,
Doubtless, when wont to high exploits, his soul
Would have attain'd, some day, the fame of Guise.
But, till then nourish'd in the midst of court,
On pleasure's breast and in the arms of love,
Nought could oppose to me but zeal's excess,
Dangerous advantage in heroic youth.

The courtiers, to his fate attach'd in crowds,
From delights' bosom, onward march'd to death.
Soft amorous figures, gages of their loves,
Their fair ones' names, upon their habits trac'd ;
With glittering diamonds, shone their armour bright,
The frivolous trappings of their nerveless arms.
Tumultuous, ardent, of experience void,
Their high imprudence bore them to the fight :
Proud of their pomp, and from their numbers fierce,
Orderless, they, with rapid steps, advanc'd.

Their eyes my camp, with different lustre, struck :
My army, to their view, in silence spread,
Nought but stern soldiers show'd, on every side,
Inur'd to toils, in combats ancient grown,
To blood accustom'd, and with wounds o'erspread ;
Their swords, their muskets form'd their whole attire.
I, like them clad, arm'd with the sword, like them,
Their dusty squadrons to the combat led,
Facing, like them, the storm of many a death ;
Solely mark'd out, by marching at their head.
Our enemies I saw subdued, o'erthrown,
Under our blows expiring, or dispers'd ;
And, with regret, their breasts this steel transpierc'd
Which better had been steep'd in Spanish blood.

Amongst those courtiers, it must be confess'd
Whom, in their flowery years, the sword cut down,
With a dishonest wound not one was marr'd :
Firm, at their posts, immoveably all stood
Before them they destruction saw advance,
Nor turn'd their eyes, nor yet a step recoil'd.
Of the French courtiers such the character :
Their usual bravery, peace enervates not ;
They fly to dangers, from the shades of ease ;
Flatterers at court, but heroes in the field.

I, midst the horrors of the battle shock,
Order'd, in vain, that Joyeuse should be spar'd ;
Him I perceiv'd, forthwith, by soldiers borne,
Pale, with deaths' shades, already, cover'd o'er.
So some soft flower, whom morn hath seen disclos'd

By zephyrs' kisses, and Aurora's tears,
Shines on our eyes a moment, and then falls
Before its time, or by the trenchant blade,
Or by the efforts of the forceful winds.

But why that mournful victory recall ?
Oh that from memory I could rather tear
The sad mementos of that dire success ! (b)
Still in my hand with Frenchman's blood distain'd :
Grandeur, so bought, for me hath not a charm ;
And my stain'd laurels with my tears are bath'd.

This hapless combat only show'd more plain
Th' abyss whence Valois, vainly, freedom sought.
More was he scorn'd, when his disgrace was known ;
Paris was less submiss, the league more bold ;
And Guise's glory, adding to his griefs,
With his affronts redoubled all his ills.
Guise, at Vimori, with more happy hand, '
Aveng'd upon the Germans, Joyeuse' death ;
My surpriz'd allies, at Auneau, o'erwhelm'd ;
And, laurel-clad, himself at Paris show'd.
A tut'lar God that victor there appear'd.
His haughty foe Valois triumphant saw,
Who, e'er insulant o'er this prince abas'd,
Him rather seem'd t' have conquer'd than have serv'd.

The feeblest courage shame at last will sting :
Th' insensible Valois that outrage spurn'd ;
A subject's pride repressing, he desir'd,

At Paris, to essay his feeble power.
It was no longer time ; or love, or fear,
For him, in every heart was now extinct :
His people, bold, for mutiny prepar'd,
Him deem'd a tyrant, since he will'd to reign.
They gather, they conspire, they spread alarms ;
Each citizen's a soldier, Paris arm'd :
A thousand rising ramparts, quickly form'd,
Menace Valois' guards around enclos'd.

Guise calm and haughty 'midst the tempest-storm,
Urg'd on the peoples' wrath, or else repress,
Of the sedition govern'd every spring,
And that vast body, at his will made move.
Fierce, to his palace rush'd the people all :
Had Guise but spoken, lifeless Valois were ; *
But, when he could have crush'd him with a glance,
To have made him tremble he appear'd content ;
And, whilst he check'd the mutineers' pursuit,
Left him, through pity left, the power of flight.

In fine, what projects pleas'd him, Guise pursued.
Too little for a tyrant, but too far—
For but a subject's will, by far too much.
Whoe'er has pow'r to make a monarch fear
Has all to doubt, would he not all infringe.
Guise, from this day, in his high views confirm'd,
Saw 'twas no longer time t' offend by halves ;
And, though rais'd high, yet on a precipice,
Did he not mount the throne, he march'd to death.

Of a revolted realm sole master now,
His heart with hope and hardihood replete,
By the Iberians succour'd, propp'd by Rome,
His brothers seconding, by France ador'd,
This haughty subject thought those times t' recal, °
When the slack offspring of our primal kings
Fall'n from their pow'r supreme, almost from birth,
The di'dem hid beneath the odious frock,
And groaning privately in cloister'd shades,
Abandon'd, to their tyrants hands, their realm.

Valois, his vengeance who, meantime, deferr'd,
Th' states of France, at Blois, at that time held.
What those states were, perhaps, you have been told:
Laws were propos'd, which ne'er were put in force ;
There of a thousand deputies, in vain,
The sterile eloquence our ills detail'd ;
For from much counsel common is th' effect
Each ill to see, without relieving one.

Amidst these states, with arrogance, came Guise,
To brave the presence of his offended prince,
Sate near the throne, and of his projects sure,
Deem'd in those deputies he subjects saw.
Their worthless troop, to his usurping sold,
Were ready, prompt, to yield him sovereign pow'r,
When, both to spare them, and to strike with dread,
T' avenge himself and reign, Valois now will'd.
Each day, his rival, careful him t' offend,
Disdainful enemy, his wrath dispis'd,
Not even suspecting, in that incens'd prince,

Firmness sufficient him to put to death.
His dest'ny blinded him : his hour was come ;
The king, in his own sight, him had destroy'd.
With many a poigniards' blow unworth'ly pierc'd,¹⁰
Dying, his pride was not at all abas'd ;
And, which Valois still fear'd perhaps, that front,
Blood-stained and pale his master seem'd to brave.
Thus that all pow'rful rebel subject died,
Of vices, virtues, an assemblage bright.
The king from whom the sovereign pow'r he fore'd,
Slothfully suffer'd it, then vengeance took.

Forthwith through Paris spread the fearful news.
The frighten'd people fill the air with cries.
The desolate elders, women all dismay'd,
The statues rush t' embrace of hapless Guise.
All Paris, in that pressing danger, deems
The church it has t' sustain, a sire avenge.
Form'dable Mayenne, the brother of the Guise
Their wrath to vengeance, midst them, animates ;
And that great conflagration, on all sides,
Rather from int'rest than resentment fans.

¹¹ Mayenne, a long time nourish'd in alarms,
Under proud Guise his warlike steel had borne : (•)
He to his glory and designs succeeds ;
And to his hands hath the leagues' sceptre pass'd.
That boundless grandeur, to his wish so dear,
Easily cheers him for a brothers' loss ;¹²
He serv'd reluctantly ; and to day Mayenne
Him would avenge much rather than obey.

Heroic courage hath Mayenne, I own ;
He, by a pol'cy blest and sage, knows how
Spirits diverse beneath his laws to join,
Slaves of their tyrants, of their masters foes :
He knows their talents, how to use them knows ; (d)
And derives, oft, from ill itself, a good.
Guise, on the eye, with greater splendour shone,
More brave, heroic, not more dangerous.
Such is Mayenne, and such his potency.
As on his prudence the proud league relies,
So young Aumale, with his presumptuous heart, ¹³
His own proud courage spreads through all their souls.
D'Aumale, his party's e'er terrific shield,
The title of invinc'ble yet retains :
Mayenne, who to mid battle leads them on,
Is the leagues' soul the other is its arm.

(e) Meanwhile, th' oppressor of the Germans, sage,
That dang'rous neighbour, that proud cath'lic king,
That king, whose art'fice is his greatest stay,
That king, your enemy, but still more mine,
Philip, (14) embracing Mayennes' quarrel, aids
The crim'nal cause of our proud rival foes ;
And Rome, (15) that ought so many ills t' suppress,
The torch of discord, Rome enkindling, lights :
He who of christians styles himself the sire,
Puts in their hands the sanguinary glaive.

From Europe's ends, to my astonish'd sight,
On Paris rush'd an assemblage of all ills,
King without subjects, succourless pursued,

Valois, at length, was forc'd t' implore my pow'r.
He thought me generous, and was not deceiv'd :
My heart was occupied with the ills of state;
Danger, so pressing, had my wrath assuag'd;
But as a brother-in-law I Valois view'd:
Duty me order'd, to its law I bow'd;
And I, a king, the pow'r of kings upheld.
To him I came, no treaty, and no gage:¹⁶
Your fate, said I, but in your courage lies;
Come! die or conquer on proud Paris' walls.
A noble pride then seem'd to fill his soul,
Myself I had not flatter'd, in his breast,
By my example, such a flame to pour;
Without a doubt, disgrace hath wak'd his pow'rs.
That ease he mourns which hath thus cast him down.
Valois had need of dest'ny thus adverse;
For oft mishaps are requisite for kings."

Such was of Henry the sincere discourse.
Meanwhile the English help he urges on:
Already, from that rebel city's walls,
Victory's voice recalls him to his camp;
Straight, on his steps, a thousand English youth,
To cut the seas, and combats seek, depart.

¹⁷ Essex was at their head, Essex whose skill
The fierce Castillians' prudence had perplex'd,
And who believ'd not an unworthy fate
Should soil those laurels which his hand had cull'd.

Henry waits not : that chief whom nothing stops,
Anxious for conquest, to depart prepares.

"Go," says the Queen to him, "go hero fam'd.
My warriors, on your steps, shall cross the waves.
Valois 'tis not, but you they wish t' attend;
Them to your generous cares my friendship yields :
Them will you see to the mid-battle fly,
Rather to imitate you than to aid.
In wars' great art, by your example form'd,
They, under you, will England learn to serve.
Soon may the league expire beneath your blows!
Spain serves Mayenne, and Rome against you is:
Go! conquer Spain; and think a great man ne'er
Ought the vain thunderings of Rome to dread.
The liberty of nations, go, avenge!
Sextus and Philip's haughtiness abase!

Philip, the heir tyrannic of his sire,
Less great, less brave, in policy as sage,
His neighbours severing but to give them chains,
Thinks from his palace depths to tame the world.

Sextus, from forth the bosom of the dust
Rais'd to the throne, of minor potency,
A soul hath haughtier still. The rival proud
Father de Montalt hath of kings become;
At Paris as at Rome he would give laws;
Under the triple di'adem's lusted pomp,
He thinks to make all serve, ev'n Philip's self.
Violent, but crafty, false and insincere,
Foe of the strong, oppressor of the weak,
At London, in my court, cabals has form'd;
And th' un'verse, which he cheats, his intrigues fill.

These are the enemies who thou must brave.
Themselves, against me, both have dar'd to raise.
One vainly fighting England and the storms,
Shows to the sea his shipwrecks and his flight ;
His warriors' blood still tinge these crimson'd shores :
The other hides at Rome, me knows, and dreads.

Then, in their sight, your great design pursue :
Be Mayenne conquer'd, Rome will be submiss ;
Her hate or favours thou alone canst rule.
Inflex'ble t' the vanquish'd, with her smiles
Complaisant to the victors, she prepares
Thee to condemn, or easily to absolve ;
'Tis thine her bolts t' extinguish, or allume.

END OF THE THIRD CANTO.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO FOURTH.

ARGUMENT.

D'Aumale was about making himself master of the camp of Henry III., when the hero, returned from England, who fights the Leaguers and effects a change of fortune. Discord counsels Mayenne, and flies to Rome to seek there for succour. Description of Rome, where Sextus V. then reign'd. Discord then finds Policy. She returns with her to Paris, raises the sorbonne, animates the sixteen against parliament, and arms the monks. The magistrates, who hold with the king's party, are delivered into the hands of the executioner. Troubles and horrible confusion in Paris.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO FOURTH.

Whilst thus, pursuing here their private talk,
And weighing, at their leisure, interests high,
Till the lore deep, they both of them had drain'd,
Of battling, conquering, how to rule the world,
The Seine, with dread, saw on its bloody banks
The standards of the league float loose in air.

Valois, from Henry far, oppress'd with care,
Th' incertitude of combat's dest'ny fear'd.
An aid was needful for his wavering views ;
Bourbon he waited, sure t' o'ercome with him.
By these delays the leaguers grew more bold ;
From Paris' gates their legions sallied forth :
The proud d'Aumale, and Nemours and Brissac,
La Chatra, Canillac, the stern St. Paul,
The bold defenders of a guilty cause,
Valois, with rapid fortune, struck aghast ;
And, often subject to repent, that king,
Griev'd for the hero he had sent away. (a)

Amongst these comb'ttants, of their master foes,
' Joyeuse's brother dar'd awhile t' appear.
From life to cloister'd depths, from thence to court,
Vicious, repentant, courtier, and a monk,
Cuirass or gown he took, quit, took again.
From holy altars, water'd with his tears,
To animate the leagues' wild rage he rush'd,
And in the breast of weeping France he plung'd
The hand he had made sacred to his God.

But, of so many warriors, he whose pow'r
Inspir'd most dread, most horror spread around,
Impetuous d'Aumale, youthful prince, wast thou,
Sprung from that Lorraine blood with heroes fill'd,
Thou, enemy of kings, of laws, of peace.
Him e'er accompany the flowery youth :
Ceaseless with them he dashes through the plains ;
Often in silence, oft with a noise immense,
By the heaven's clearness, through the shade of night,
On the stunn'd foe bearing throughout his war,
The earth his arm spreads with th' besiegers' blood.
So from Caucasu's brow, or Atho's height,
Whence the eye views earth, air, and waves afar,
Eagles and vultures, on extended wings,
The vast clouds cleaving, with precip'tate flight,
Swoop on their feather'd prey, through fields of air,
Or in the woods, or meads, the flocks invade,
And up the blood-stain'd cliff's wild beetling sides
Bear, with loud cries, their torn, their living prey.

Already fill'd with hope, with glory drunk,
Had he to Valois tent, his way made good.

Night and surprize augmented the alarm :
All bent, all trembled, yielded to his sword.
That stormy torrent, prompt to overflow,
Was ripe t' inundate all things with its shock.
The star of morning had begun t' appear :
Already Mornay, who his lord's return
Preceded, Paris' haughty tow'rs beheld.
Quick, with a mingled noise of horror stunn'd,
He runs; he sees, in a disorder wild,
The soldiers of Valois, and Bourbon's too:
"Just heav'n! is't thus that you our coming wait?
Henry, to aid you, goes; returns; you fly?
You fly, my comrades !" on his word's being heard,
As, at the capitol's proud base was seen,
In times of old, the founder of high Rome,
Press'd by the Sabines, at the name of Jove,
'T' arrest the Romans; at the name alone
Of Henry, rallied the disordered French.
Shame them inflames, they march, they shout aloud :
"Under thine eyes we'll conquer; hero, come!"

Henry appear'd that moment in their midst,
Brilliant as lightning in the tempest depths :
He flies before the ranks, moves at his head ;
He fights, they follow ; and their fate is chang'd :
Light'ning is in his eyes, death in his hands.
Round him the chiefs, re-animated, press ;
Victory returns, the leaguers disappear,
As at the rays of day, that dawns and shines,
Night's starry lustres' dissipate are dimm'd.
In vain, d'Aumale arrests, upon those banks,

The flying troops of his dishearten'd friends,
His voice, awhile, recalls them to the fight;
Great Henry's voice precipitates their steps,
And his front's threatening terrour turns them back;
Their chief unites them, but their fears disperse.
D'Aumale is with them, in their flight, borne off;
As from some hoary mountain's frost capp'd height;
Amidst the ice flakes, and the melted snows,
Falls, rolls a rock that threaten'd erst the skies.

What do I say? he stops; he shows his foes,
He shows, once more, that front, so long time fear'd.
From those who drag him off he, wild, escapes;
Back to the fight asham'd of life, he flies;
His vanquisher amaz'd awhile, he stops;
But soon with foes is he environ'd round.
And death, to punish his bold deed prepares.

Discord beheld, and trembled for d'Aumale:
She, the barbarian, need had of his days:
She mounts in air, and wings it to his aid.
Then she approaches; to the num'rous throng,
That him o'erwhelms; her iron shields immense,
Impenetrable, she opposes, which
Or sends to death, or horror which pursues,
And which at sight, or rage, or fear inspires.
Inexorable Discord, child of hell!
Then, first, assistant did'st thou e'er appear:
Thou sav'd'st a hero, thou prolong'd'st his fate,
By that same hand, the minister of death,
By that same barb'rous hand, so us'd to crime,

Which, until now, a victim never spar'd.
She, to the gates of Paris drags d'Aumale,
Red, with wounds cover'd which he had not felt.
She to his ills applies a healing hand;
She that blood staunches, for her pleasure shed.
But whilst his body she to strength restores,
His heart, with mortal poisons, she infects.
So, oft, some tyrant, in his pity, stern,
The fatal sentence of th' unhappy stays;
His arm his secret crimes he makes to serve;
And death, him, when they are committed, yields.

Henry could profit by th' advantage great,
With which the fate of war had crown'd his worth :
The price of moments, in a war, he knows :
At once he presses on the foe surpriz'd :
He wills th' assaults the battles should succeed ;
And tracks of death, around their walls, he makes.
Strong in such aid, and fill'd with hope, Valois
Gives pattern to the troops, takes one from him ;
Th' alarms he braves, the labours he sustains.
Pain hath its pleasures, charms, too, peril hath.

United are the chiefs, their vows prevail:
And forthwith terrour, marching on before,
Scattering the cohorts of the fear-struck foe,
Comes bursting, in their disorder'd sight, the gates.
What can Mayenne do in that pressing hour?
A groaning people form Mayenne's support ;
Here weeping daughters ask of him a sire ;
There brother weeps a brother at the tomb :

Each mourns the present, and the future fears;
Alarm'd, no more can that vast corps unite.
They meet, consult, they will to fly or yield.
All are irresolute, of defence none think ;^(b)
Rashness to fear so oft the vulgar weak
Permit, uncheck'd, with levity, to succeed !
Groaning, Mayenne looks on their troop dismay'd ;
His wavering soul a hundred projects shar'd ;
When Discord, quick, that hero thus accost,
In those dire words, and shakes her hissing snakes :

“Thou worthy heir of a here dreaded name,
Thou, who unitest with me for thy revenge,
In my sight taught, and form'd beneath my laws,
Thou thy protectress hear, and know my voice.
Fear not this people volatile and weak,
Whose courage now a trifling ill hath chill'd ;
Mine are their souls, and, in my hands, their hearts ;
Soon shalt thou see them seconding our views,
Steep'd in my gall, and to my rage a prey,
Fight with audacity, and die with joy.”

Prompter than lightning, Discord then, forthwith,
Through fields of air cuts, with a wing assur'd.
Throughout, amongst the French, alarm and woe
Objects appear full charming to her eyes :
A death her breath spreads o'er innumerable plains ;
Dies too the nascent fruit, its germ attaint :
O'erthrown, the corn lies languid on the ground ;
Itself heaven shrouds, the stars themselves grow pale ;

And thundering burst, that growl beneath her feet,
Seem dreaded death to th' affrighted crowds t' announce.

Her to those fecund shores a whirlwind bore
Which, with his streams, swift Eridanus laves.

Rome to her cruel eyes at length appears ;
Rome, once her temple, and the dread of man ;
Rome whose high destiny in peace, in war,
Is to be e'er the mistress of the earth.
There by the fate of war, of old were seen,
Upon their bloody thrones, her kings enchain'd ;
Under her terr'ble eagle bent the world.
A pow'r more mild she uses in our days :
Beneath her yoke her vanquishers she brings,
Governs their spirits and commands their hearts ;
Laws her opinions, her decrees are arms.

There near that cap'tal by alarms once rul'd,
O'er Mars and o'er Bellona's ruins proud,
On the high Cæsars' throne, a Pontiff sits ;
Trample, with tranquil feet, the favoured priests,
The Cato's tombs, and great Emilius' dust.
The throne is near the altar ; pow'r supreme
Sceptre and censor to the same hands yields.

There founded God himself his nascent church, (*)
Triumphant often, persecuted oft :
Thither his first apostles did with truth
Lead candour bright and mild simplicity.
Him follow'd his successors, blest awhile,

Respected more as they themselves abas'd.
In a vain splendour was their front ne'er clad ;
Their austere virtue poverty sustain'd ;
And, jealous of that good which christians seek,
From their thatch'd cots, to martyrdom they flew.

Time, which all things corrupts, soon chang'd their ways ;
Heav'n, for our punishment, them grandeur gave.

Rome, since that time, puissant and profane,
Herself hath seen abandon'd to the base ;
Treason, and murder, and empoisonments,
Of her new pow'r the dreadful basis form'd.
Incest, adultery, Christ's successors plac'd,
Loose, in the sanctuary's central seat ;
And Rome, whom their dread empire sore oppress'd,
Under these tyrant saints her false gods mourn'd,
Thence, since, the wisest maxims have been heard ;
To spare, or better to veil crime was known ;⁽¹⁾
Better are rul'd the rights of church and realm : ²
Rome became arbitress, not dread, of kings ;
Under the triple crown's imposing pride,
Virtue, once more, her modest self appear'd.
But all the rest of mortals to controul
Is Rome's especial virtue to this day.

Sextus was king, then, of the church and Rome. ³
If to be honour'd with a great man's name,
It may suffice to be false, fear'd, austere,
Midst greatest kings will Sextus be esteem'd.
To fifteen years of guile he ow'd his state :

His virtues, vices, he, that time, could hide.
He seem'd to fly the rank he burn'd t' obtain,
And made himself be deem'd too base t' ascend.

Under the shield of his despotic arm,
Pol'cy, deep in the Vatican, held rule,
Daughter of Interest and Ambition, who
Fraud and Sedition brought to light, her seed.
This wily monster, full of many a change,
O'erwhelm'd with cares, tranquil and simple seems ;
Her eyes deep, piercing, en'mies of repose,
Never have felt the poppies of sweet rest.
She of disorder'd Europe constantly
The dazzled eyes, by her disguises, cheats :
Falsehood, who subtle, her discourse conducts, (°)
Borr'wing of Truth herself an aid, her frauds,
With the eternal Godhead's seal, imprints,
And, to avenge her inj'ries, makes heav'n serve.

Scarcely had Discord struck upon her eyes,
When, with an air mysterious, she runs
Into her arms; her, flatters with a smile
Malign, caresses her; then all at once,
Taking a tone, replete with sadness, says :
"No longer am I in those blissful times
When realms seduc'd presented me their vows,
When credulous Europe, to my pow'r submit,
Her churches' laws confounded in my own.
I spake; and quick humiliated kings,
From the throne, trembling, to my feet came down ;
O'er all the earth my voice breath'd wars at will,

From the high Vatican my bolts I launch'd ;
In my proud hands both life and death I held ;
I gave, I took away, I states restor'd.
That happy time's no more. Almost within
My hands, doth France's senate, all the bolts ⁴
I launch extinguish ; full of hate for me,
But for the churches' self with love replete,
From other nations errour's blind removes ; ⁵
'Twas it, my visage that unmasking, first,
Avenged Truth whose borrowed form I wore,
What can I, Discord, ardent thee to serve,
Not do to punish it, or else seduce !
Come ! and my thunder let thy torches light ;
Let us begin, at France, to spoil the earth ;
Let prince and state re-fall within our chains."
She said, and sudden launch'd herself in air.

(⁶) Far from th' eclat of Rome, from mundane pomp,
From temples consecrated to human pride,
Whose proud array imposes on the world,
Humble Religion hides in deserts lone :
There in a peace profound, with God she dwells ;
Whilst that her name, polluted by the world,
The holy pretext is of tyrants' rage,
The vulgars' blind, and of the great the scorn.
T' endure's her destiny, to bless, her lot :
Secretly she for th' outrageous ingrate prays ;
Bright in her charms, sans ornament, or art,
Her modest beauty e'er conceals itself
From hypocritic eyes of eager crowds,
Who, fortune worshipping, to her altars rush.

That daughter of the skies well knew, one day,
'enging her altars' proper worship, she
hat hero must adopt, and call her son:
he thought him worthy, and her ardent sighs
'be blest time hasten'd, for her wish too slow.
uick, Policy and impious Discord come (5)
'heir august foe in secret to surprize.
o God her eyes she raises, moist in tears,
ier God, to prove her, yields her to their rage.
Monsters, from whom she inj'ry e'er had borne,
They, with her sacred veils, their heads impure
Cover, those habits, by man honour'd, take,
And rush through Paris, to fulfil their schemes.

Policy adroit, with pleasing air, then slides
Into th' vast bosom of the old sorbonne;
'Twas there those sages met, of all rever'd,
Sacred interpreters of the truths of heav'n,
Who, arbiters, models for the christian world,
Bound to their worship, faithful to their prince,
A manly vigour till that time had kept,
Always impen'trable to errour's darts.
How few the virtues that fore'er resist!
Th' enchantress voice of the fiend disguis'd
Staggers their senses, with its flattering speech.
To the ambitious, greatness she holds forth;
And with a mitre's lustre dims their view:
The miser's voice in secret her was sold:
By well tim'd praises she the learn'd enchants,
And for vain incense he betrays his truth:
By her voice menac'd, she the weak e'er awes.

They meet in tumult, they in tumult act.
'Midst cries confus'd, 'midst uproar and dispute,
Truth from those places, weeping, takes her flight. (^h)
Then in the name of all a senior cries:
"The church makes kings, chastises, and absolves;
We are that church, in us alone its law;
We reject Valois, he's no more our king.
Oaths, once so sacred, we your chains destroy."

Scarce had he said, inhuman Discord, quick,
The odious law, in bloody letters, marks.
Each swears by her, and signs beneath her eyes. ⁷

Sudden she wings away, from church to church,
That mighty ent'rprize she t' the factious tells;
Under Augustin's dress, or Francis' gown,
In cloisters holy makes her voice be heard;
She, with loud cries, those austere spectres calls,
Of their hard yoke the voluntary slaves.
"Religion's features know," says she, "avenge
Of the Most High the interest. It is I
Who come to you, and I who on you call.
This steel, which from my hands, shines on your eyes,
This sword, so fearful to our haughty foes,
By God's own hand into my own was put.
Tis time to issue from your temple shades:
Go! spread th' example of an holy zeal;
Show to the French, uncertain of their faith,
To immolate their king, is serving God.
Consider ye that Levi's sacred seed, (⁸)
With holy service honour'd by their God,

Deserv'd that honour, when t' their altar-flames
They bore hands stain'd with Israel's infant blood.
Where are those times, where are those prosp'rous days
When Frenchmen I by Frenchmen's hands saw slain?
Ye holy priests 'twas ye who led their arms;
To you alone Coligny owes his death.
Lswam in blood; let blood then flow once more:
Appear! inspire a realm that me adores!

The monster then to all the signal gives;
All are infected with her fatal bane;
Through Paris she their solemn march conducts;
The cross's standard floated in its midst.
They chaunt, their cries, both furious and devout,
Seem to associate heav'n to their revolt.
Dire imprecations, with the public prayers,
From their fanatic views, are heard to mix.
Audacious priests and soldiers imbecile,
Their arms they charge with sabre and with sword;
A heavy cuirass hath their gown conceal'd.
That inf'mous soldiery in Paris' walls
Follow, midst waves of a wild people, God,
That God of peace, whom they before them bear.

Mayenne who, distant, saw their vain emprise
In public lauds it, tho' in secret scorns;
The people well he knows, submissively,
Fanat'cism with religion e'er confound;
He knew the prince's necessary art
To feed the weakness, error of the mob.
That pious scandal, he in fine, applauds;

The wise man scorns it, and the soldier mocks :
Nathless, the people, raised to heav'n, send forth
Loud shouts of hope, of passion and of joy ;
And as their courage fear succeeded erst,
So, in a moment, fear to rage gives place.
Thus the sea angel, on the ocean's breast
The waves, at will, or irritates, or calms.

¹⁰ Discord the rebel sixteen had preferr'd,
Amongst the factious signalized by crime.
Of their new queen th' insolent ministers,
Upon her bloody car, with her, they mount ;
Pride, treason, fury, death, before their steps,
Through rivulets of gushing blood, march on.
Born in obscurity, in baseness rais'd,
Their hate for kings, their sole nobility ;
And near the dais, by the people borne,
Trembling, Mayenne, beholds them at his sides ;
The ordinary freaks of Discord's sport
Accomplices that equalizes, oft. ¹¹
Thus, when the winds, the water's restless lords,
Of Seine, or Rhone have lifted up the waves,
The mud that stood within their grotts profound
On the wave's face, a bubbling, rises up ;
Thus in the rage of conflagrations wild,
Which cities alter into luckless plains,
Brass, iron, lead that fires have render'd soft,
In the flame mingle with the gold they dim.

'Midst those seditious and tumultuous days,
Justice alone th' contagion could resist ;

Nor thirst for greatness, neither hope nor fear,
Nor ought had in her hand the scale inclin'd ;
Untouch'd her temple was ; and Equity,
Modesty near her, flying, safety sought.

An august senate was within that fane,
Friendly to innocence, of crime the dread,
Which, of its prince's laws the mouth and aid,
March'd, 'twixt his realm and him, with equal pace.
In the equity of kings its proper trust,
The complaints of France oft carries to their feet.
Its sole ambition is the public weal ;
Rebellion both and tyranny it hates ;
Fill'd ever with respect, with courage fill'd,
Slavery distinctly from ambition marks ;
And for our liberties e'er prompt to arm,
Knows Rome, her honours, yet her pow'r can quell.

A frightful band of the league's tyrant lords
Surrounds the door of Themis' sacred fane :
Bussy conducted them ; th' assassins vile
That gladiator, by his boldness rais'd ⁽ⁱ⁾
To the culpable honour, proudly enters there,
And in those words bespeaks that house august,
By whom the fortunes of the realm is rul'd :
"Ye mercenary props of law's wild maze,
Plebeians ! that would the tutors be of kings,
Cowards ! that in distress and 'midst cabals
Your venal grandeur's shameless honour place,
Timid in war, and tyrants during peace,
Obey the people, hear to their decrees.

Citizens were first before e'er masters were.
Again we seize on rights, our fathers lost.
Long have the people been by you abus'd ;
The sceptre tires them, and the sceptre's lost.
Efface those words, which doubtless you begat,
Absolute power, words which we fear and hate :
Judge in the people's name, and for the state,
Hold as a senate place, not for the king :
The sorbonne imitate, or my vengeance dread."

By silence high the senate sole replies.
Such, in th' o'erthrown and burning walls of Rome,
Those senators, by weight of years bow'd down,
Haughtily waited, on their seats unmov'd,
The Gauls and death with fix'd and tranquil eyes.
Bussy, with fury fill'd, not without fear :
"Obey, ye tyrants," says, "and follow me."—
Then Harlay rose, Harlay that noble guide,
Chief of a parliament, just as it was bold ;
He to the sixteen shows himself, asks chains,
With front that would perversity condemn. ¹²
The heads of justice near him were beheld,
Warm, of his punishment, to share his fame,
Victims of the faith their kings they ow'd,
¹³ Their generous hands, to tyrants' chains, hold forth.

Muse! render me those names, so dear to France ;
Heroes, licentiousness oppress'd, enframe !
Virtuous de Thou, Mole, ¹⁴ Scarron, Bayeul,
That just man Potier, thou, young Longueil,
Thou, in whom soul and virtue outstripp'd years,
To hasten on thy noble destiny.

The senate all, in fine, by them enchain'd,
Through a vile people, is in triumph dragg'd,
To that dread ¹⁵ castle, palace of revenge,
Which oft shut in both innocence and crime,
Thus have these factious leaders chang'd the state ;
Fallen the sorbonne, the senate is no more.
But why this rush, these lamentable cries ?
These instruments of guilty death, for what ?
What magistrates are those, whom now the hand
Of the executioner hurries to the tomb,
By order of their tyrants? Virtues have
In Paris, now, the destiny of crimes.
Most honourable victims they ; Brisson,
¹⁶ Larcher, Tardiff, ye, by that shameful death,
Are not disgrac'd ; ye generous shades, blush not !
Your names in memory, e'er shall live renown'd ;
Who for his king expires, with glory dies.

Discord, meanwhile, amidst the mutineers,
Of her designs the dire success applauds.
Her tranquil cruelty, with haughty air,
Th' effects of civil war contemplates pleas'd ;
Within those blood-stain'd walls a wretched few,
Leagu'd 'gainst their prince, amongst themselves at war,
The hapless playthings of intestine rage,
The ruins of their country sad advance ;
Tumult within, and peril all, abroad,
On every hand wreck, carnage, and the dead.

END OF THE FOURTH CANTO.



THE HENRIAD.

CANTO FIFTH.

ARGUMENT.

The besieged are vividly pressed. Discord excites James Clement to leave Paris to assassinate the king. She invokes, from the bottom of hell, the demon of Fanaticism, who conducts that parricide. Sacrifice of the leaguers to the infernal spirits. Henry III. is assassinated. Sentiments of Henry IV, He is recognised king by the army.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO FIFTH.

Meanwhile those mortal engines on advanc'd,
Which, in their breasts, the death of rebels bore ;
And flying, from all sides, the fire and balls
Batter'd their walls, from many a brazen mouth.

The sixteen and their rage, Mayenne, his care,
A mut'nous people's savage insolence,
And the law-doctors' scandalous harangues,
Against great Henry were a weak support :
Vict'ry was fast approaching on his steps.
Rome, Sextus, Philip, menacing burst forth :
But Rome, no more, was terr'ble to the world :
Her pow'rless thunders lost themselves in air ;
And the old Spaniard's ordinary sloth
Of necessary aid th' besieg'd depriv'd.
The soldiery, wand'ring on all sides, through France,
Without assisting Paris, sack'd our towns.
He stay'd, perfidious, till the leaguers, spent,
An easy conquest to his arm might yield ;
And his false friendship's danger-bearing aid,
No ally was preparing, but a lord ;

When a stern madman's cool determin'd hand
Seem'd, for a time, their destiny to change.

Ye peaceful inmates of fair Paris' walls,
Whom heav'n hath caus'd to live in happier times,
Me pardon, if my hand to mind retrace
The crim'nal hist'ry of your sires seduc'd.
Th' inf'my of their crimes not reaches you :
The love you bear your kings hath all repaid.

Some solitaires e'er the church hath rear'd,
Who, under rules severe together met,
And mark'd, distinctly, from the rest of men,
Themselves to God have solemnly devote.
Some, ever dwelling in a peace profound,
By the world's vain attractions never lur'd;
Of that rest jealous, none from them can take,
Have fled from mortals whom they might have serv'd :
Others, to the state more necessary made,
The desk have mounted, and illum'd the church ;
But with their flattering gifts inebriate oft,
Spread through the age, have taken, too, its ways ;
It cabals, too, their dull ambition knows,
And many a country doth their intrigues mourn.
Thus amongst mortals, by a sad abuse,
The good, most perfect is the source of ill.

Those, who of Dom'nic have embrac'd the life,
Their sect have seen establish'd, long, in Spain,
And, from th' obscurity of humblest cares,
Have reach'd, at once, the palaces of kings.

With not less zeal, but yet with much less pow'r,
That honour'd order flourished in France,
By kings protected, peaceful, blest, in fine,
Had not its breast the traitor Clement borne.

Clement, in that retreat, had e'en from youth,
Felt the dark access of a virtue stern.
Credulous in devotion, weak of soul,
The torrent of th' rebellion he pursued.
O'er this insensate youth foul Discord spread
Th' infectious poison of her infernal mouth.
Before the holy altars, each day, prone,
Heav'n, with his criminal prayers, he fatigu'd.
Tis said, that, soil'd with ashes, once, and dust,
This horr'ble prayer found utt'rance from his tongue.

"God, who thy church do'st 'venge, and tyrants quell,
Wilt thou be, ceaseless, seen thy sons t' oppress,
A king's hands arming who outrages thee,
To favour murder, and the perjurd bless?
Great God, these plagues, to prove us, are enough!
Against thy en'mies deign at last to rise;
Misery and death turn thou, from us, afar;
Deliv'r us from this king thy wrath hath giv'n:
Come, thou the pride of angry heav'n decrease,
Make thy destroying angel thee precede;
Descend! come, arm thee, let thy bolts inflam'd
Strike, and before us crush their impious host!
Let chiefs, let soldiers, both th' expiring kings
Fall, like the leaf strown by the sport of winds;
And let our cath'lic leaguers by thee sav'd,
O'er their gor'd bodies, thee address in psalms!"

Discord, attentive, traversing the airs,
Hears these wild cries, and carries them to hell; (*)
And, instant, from those sombre regions, brings
The cru'lest tyrant of the realm of shades.
He comes, Fanat'cism is his horrid name:
Of wild Religion the unnat'ral child,
Arm'd to defend her, to destroy he seeks,
Prest to her breast, embraces, and then wounds.

He 'twas, in Raba, on the Arno's banks, ²
The offspring of th' unhappy Ammon led,
When to their Moloch groaning mothers gave
The foaming entrails of their offer'd sons.
He too dictated Jephtha's cruel vow:
His hand conducted to his daughter's heart.
He 'twas that, op'ning Chalca's impious mouth,
Ask'd by his voice the death of Ephigene.
France, in thy forests, long time hath he dwelt.
To stern Teutates he thy incense bore: ³
Those holy murders thou remember'st yet
Which, for your worthless gods, your druids made.
From the high capitol, to pagan ears,
"Those christians strike! rend and destroy!" exclaim'd.
But when God's Son old Rome at length obey'd,
From th' cap'tol, lowly, pass'd he to the church;
And breath'd those furies into christian hearts,
Them persecutors made, being martyrs erst.
A turbulent sect he, once, at London form'd, ⁴
That bloody hands cast on a king too weak.
(*)At Lisbon, at Madrid, he lights those fires,
Those solemn death-piles, where th' unhappy Jews

are every year, in pomp, by priests, despatch'd,
For quitting not the faith their fathers held.

In his disguises, e'er did he put on
Of heavenly ministering the sacred dress :
But, for this time, he, in eternal night,
A novel shape, for novel crimes assum'd ;
Boldness and artifice the dressings form'd.
The mein and features he of Guise assumes,
Of that proud Guise, in whom were seen appear
The tyrant of the state, his master's king,
And who, e'er powerful, even after death,
Fair France still drew to the dread combat-field.
He, with a horrid casque, his head had charg'd :
A falchion's in his hand, for death prepar'd ;
His side is pierc'd with blows, with which, foretimes,
That factious chief was massacred at Blois ;
And his blood's voice, which in abundance flows,
Seems to accuse Valois, and vengeance ask.

'Twas in that terrible and mournful dress,
That, midst the poppies which sleep sheds around,
He sought for Clement, in his deep retreat.
There Superstition and disturb'd Cabal,
With False Zeal, heated by transcendent ire,
Watch'd, at his gate, and open'd it, at once.
He enters, and, with voice majestic, proud :
"Thy prayer, thy vows," saith he, "doth God receive ;
But, from thy praise, thy worship, shall he have
Nought but eternal plaints and powerless vows ?

The God, who serves the league, needs other gifts :
And claims from thee those which thou ask'st of him.

Of yore, had Judith offer'd to her God,
To save her country, naught but cries and tears ;
If, fearing for her friends, for life had fear'd,
Bethulias' walls had Judith fall'n seen ?
These holy acts, lo ! thou must imitate,
The gift, in fine, thou must present, behold !
But, you already blush, to have deferr'd.
Run ! fly ! and let, in consecrated blood,
Freeing the French from their vile king, thy hand
'Venge Paris, Rome, the universe and me !
Valois, assassinating, took my life ;
By a like blow his perf'dy must be paid.
But take no dread thou of th' assassin's name ;
'Twas crime in him, 'twill virtue be in thee.
The church's vengeance, lawful all things makes.
Murder is just then, and heav'n sanctions it.
What say I ? it commands it : and instructs
Thee, by my voice, that it hath chosen thus,
By thy sole arm, to yield Valois to death :
Happy, if vengeance consummating, thou
Canst join, to France's king, the Navarrese.
And if of these two king's the realm preserv'd
Thee could—But ah the times are not yet come.
Bourbon must yet survive ; the God, his ire
Now persecutes, the glory of his fall
For other hands reserves ; do thou fulfil
Of that high, jealous God, the great designs,
And take the gift which thee, by me, he sends.

The phantom, at these words, a falchion flash'd,
Which in th' infernal waters Hate hath dipp'd;
In Clement's hand he puts that fatal gift;
He flies, and to his dark abode, re-dives.

Deceiv'd with ease, that solitary youth
Himself depositary of heav'n's int'rest deems.
He kisses, with respect, that fatal gift;
He, on his knees, th' Almighty's arm implores;
And, with the fiend replete, whose wrath him guides,
With holy air, for parricide prepares.

To error how submissive is man's heart!
Clement a happiness serene then felt:
He felt that confidence his soul impress
Which strengthens innocence in holy hearts:
His tranquil fury march'd with eyes abas'd;
To heav'n are rais'd his sacrilegious vows;
The austere print his brow of virtue bears;
The parricidal sword his gown conceals.
He goes: his friends aware of his intent,
Scenting the path, beneath his feet, with flow'rs,
With holy awe, conduct him to the gates,
Bless his design, encourage him, instruct,
Already place his name amongst those names
In Rome's proud calendar fore'er ador'd,
France's avenger call him, with loud cries,
And, in advance, with incense, him invoke.
'Twas with less ardency, and with less zeal,
The primal christians, avidious of death,
The firm supporters of their father's faith,

Of yore, their brethren follow'd to the stake,
Envied the sweetness of their happy deaths,
And weeping kiss'd the traces of their feet.
The blind fanatic, and the christian true, (°)
Have borne, two often, the same character ;
They the same courage have, the same desires.
Crime hath its heroes, martyrs error hath.
Vain judges we of zeal or false or true !
For villains oft bear likeness to the great.

Mayenne, whose eyes knew all things well to watch,
Saw them the stroke prepare and ign'rance feign'd ;
His prudent art'fice, of that odious crime
Thought, without joining, to collect the fruit :
Adroitly he the more seditious left
The care that young fanatic to inspire.

Whilst of the league a homicidal troop
To the gates of Paris the perfidious led,
Of the sixteen the sacrilegious band,
On that event, interrogated fate.
Long since the curious boldness of the queen •
Had, of that odious science, sought to know
The secrets, and had search'd that magic art,
So oft chimerical, so crim'nal e'er.
Her pattern follow'd all ; the people weak,
The servile copiers of the crimes of court,
Lovers of novelty, with marvels smit,
Yielded, in crowds, to these impieties.

In night's deep shade, beneath a vault obscure,
Silence conducted the assembly base,

To the pale flickering of a magic torch,
Rose a vile altar, dress'd upon a tomb :
'Twas there the two king's images were plac'd, (^d)
The objects of their outrages and fears.
Their sacrilegious hands the name of God
Have, on that altar, mix'd with demons' names.
Around those gloomy walls are lances rang'd,
In bloody vases are their points immers'd,
Of that dread mystery the threat'ning show.
Priest of this fane one of those Hebrews stands,
Proscrib'd of earth, and cit'zens of the world,
Who their deep grief, from sea to sea, convey,
And, with a mass of superstitions old,
Have, for a long time, every nation fill'd.

At first, around her, wrath inspir'd, commence
The leaguers, with loud cries, that impious rite.
Their parricidal hands they wash in blood ;
Upon the altar, Valois' side they pierce ;
With added terrour, and with still more rage,
Under their feet, they Henry's image throw ;
' And think that death, obedient to their wrath,
Will send those kings the damage of these blows.

Meantime the Hebrew pray'rs to curses joins :
The abyss invokes, and heav'n and God himself,
All those curst spirits that the world infest,
And all the flames of lightning and of hell.

Such, at Gilboa, were the secret rites
Which the witch offer'd to th' infernal gods,

What time, invok'd before a cruel king,
She the seer Samuel's frightful image call'd.
So against Judah, from Samaria's height,
Thunder'd the impious mouths of prophets false :
Or so, th' inflex'ble Ateius, at Rome,
The arms of Crassus, in God's name, denounc'd.
To magic accents, which his mouth sends forth,
The sixteen dare to wait for heav'n's response ;
They think to force it to unveil their fate.
Heav'n, them to punish, fav'ring seems to hear :
The laws of nature, for them, interrupts ;
From those mute caves a sadden'd murmur breaks ;
Lightnings, redoubled in the night profound,
Flash a wild day, that gleams, then disappears.
Brilliant with glory, Henry, midst these fires,
On Victory's car appears, before their eyes :
His noble front serene have laurels crown'd,
And, in his hand, the kingly sceptre shone.
Then is the air with thunder-bolts inflam'd,
The fire-heap'd altar falls, in earth it sinks ;
Th' o'erwhelm'd sixteen, the horror-stricken Jew,
In night their crime and terroure seek to hide.

These fires, these thunders, this most fearful noise,
Valois' inevitable doom foretold.
God, from his throne, had number'd out his days,
Far from his side withdrawn his needful help :
Death stood, impatient o'er his victim, stern ;
And God, to cause his fall, permitted crime.

To the camp-royal, fearless, Clement march'd..
Arrives, and with his king demands to speak ;

Says, that by God himself, he, thither led,
To re-establish the crown's rights had come,
And to the king would weighty secrets show.
They question, doubt him, and they watch him long ;
Some dreadful myst'ry fear, beneath that dress :
Their scrutiny he suffers, unalarm'd ;
With simple manners, satisfies them all.
Each, in his converse, deems he truth perceives.

The guard, at length, present him to the king.
The sovereign's look doth not the traitor quail.
With reverent air, and mild, he bends the knee ;
Observes, at leisure, where to place his blows ;
And the shrewd falsehood that directs his speech,
Dictates him his perfidious harangue.

“ Suffer,” says he, “ great king, my timid voice
That God t' address who causes kings to reign ;
Him, before all, permit my heart to bless,
For good his justice seeks to shed on thee.
The virtuous Potier, prudent Villeroi, ¹⁰
Amidst thy enemies, have kept their faith ;
Harlay, great Harlay, whose intrep'd zeal ¹¹
Was always formidable to that people false,
From prison depths, all hearts, once more, unites,
Your subjects gathers, and the league confounds.
God, who, the wise e'er braving and the strong,
By feeblest hands accomplishes his works,
Before great Harlay, me, himself had led.
Fill'd with his light, instructed by his mouth,

I to my king have flown, this letter give,
Which Harlay put within my faithful hands.

The letter Valois eagerly receives.
Heav'n for so prompt a change, he blest.
"When shall my justice, to my wish," says he,
"Thy service recompense, thy zeal repay?"
Saying these words, outstretch'd he held his arms :
Instantly, then, his sword the monster draws,
Strikes, and, with fury, plunges in his side.
The blood pours forth, amazement seizes all ;
On him they rush ; they cry aloud ; and quick,
A thousand arms, the wretch to slay, are rais'd :
He, them, with eye unlow'r'd, disdainful, views ;
Bold in his parricide, and quit towards France,
Waits, on his knees, the recompense of death :
Of France and Rome he deems himself the stay ;
For him, he thinks, heav'n, op'ning wide, he views ;
And asking God the palm of martyrdom,
Blesses, in death, the strokes by which he dies.

O, blindness fearful ! O, illusion dread !
Worthy at once of pity and of fear,
Less guilty of the sovereign's death, perhaps,
Than those law-doctors, en'mies of their king,
Whose voices, round, shedding a deadly bane,
Had a weak solitary's reason left !

Already Valois touch'd his latest hour,
Only a glimpse of light his eyes now saw ;
Round him arrang'd, his courtiers, all in tears,

Divided, secretly, in diverse aims,
Forming, with common voice, the same laments,
Express'd their griefs, dissembled or sincere.
Some, whom the hope of change smil'd flattering on,
From the king's danger, small affliction felt ;
Others, whom interested fear distrest,
In the king's stead, their own past fortune wept.

Midst this mix'd noise of clamours and of plaints,
Thou, Henry, veritable tears did shed.
Thy foe he was ; but hearts, to feeling born,
In these dread moments, easily are mov'd.
Nought but his friendship Henry brought to mind :
In vain his int'rest 'gainst his pity fought ;
This virtuous hero from himself conceal'd
That the king's death a diadem him gives.

Towards him, Valois, by a last effort, turns
His heavy eyes, that death was near to close,
And, touching his victorious hands with his,
To him, " retain those generous tears," he says :
" Th' indignant universe thy king must weep ;
Bourbon do thou fight, reign, and me avenge.
I die, and leave thee, in the midst of storms,
Set on a shoal, encompass'd by my wrecks.
My throne awaits thee, it to thee is due :
Enjoy the good defended by thy hands :
But deem that thunderbolts surround it e'er :
There mounting, fear the God that gives it thee,
From criminal dogmas undeceiv'd, may'st thou
His rites, his altars, by thy hands re-raise !

Adieu ! reign blest ; may stronger genius guard,
And from th' assassins steel thy life defend.
Thou know'st the league, and thou these blows perceiv'st
Me have they pass'd that they may reach to thee ;
A day will come when a more barb'rous hand,
Perhaps—just heav'n, oh spare a worth so rare !
Permit"—But at these words, relentless death
Comes, on his head to swoop, and ends his fate.

On his death-news, Paris, to transports vile,
Of guilty joy, herself a prey gives up ;
With many a victor shout they fill the air :
All labours cease ; the fanes are open thrown ;
With crowns of flow'rs, they have the heads adorn'd ;
They consecrate this day to endless feasts.(*)
Their eyes view Bourbon as a friendless chief,
Who but his valour has, and fame, for aids.
And can he now the strengthen'd league resist ?
The church enrag'd, and Spain his enemy,
The Vat'cans shafts, so dangerous, so fear'd,
More powerful than them, the new world's gold ?

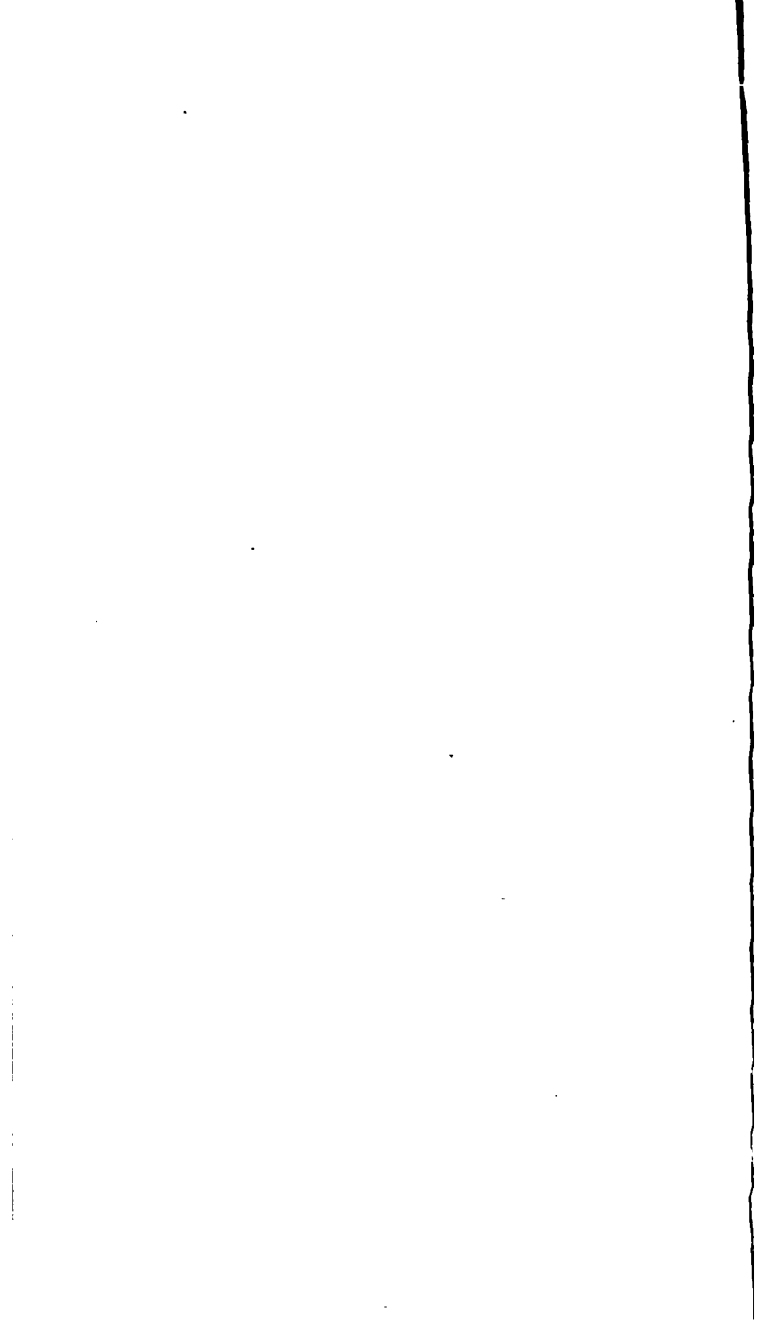
Some warriors now, in politics unapt,
Rather bad subjects than staunch catholics,
Colouring, with scruple feign'd, their wrong design,
From Calvin's standard separate their own ;
But, with more faithful warmth, the rest inflam'd,
Their zeal redouble for the cause of kings.
These friends appear'd, these generous soldiers, whom
Upon his steps, long time had victory led,
Have recogniz'd him lord of dubious France ;

Him worthy it th' united camp believes.
These chevaliers brave, Givris, d'Aumonts,
Great Montmorencis, Sancis, the Crillons,
Swear him to follow to earth's farthest bounds :
Less form'd for disputation than for war,
True to their God, and faithful to their kings,
'Tis honour calls them ; at her voice they march.

"'Tis you whose courage," Bourbon says, "my friends,
Th' inheritance of my blood shall me restore ;
The peers, the holy oil, the kingly oath,
Make the throne's pomp, but do not make my rights.
'Twas on the buckler your first kings were seen
The oaths receiving of your valiant sires.
The camp of vict'ry is the temple, where
To nations, you their sovereigns ought to give."

Thus he explains himself ; and soon prepares
His throne to merit, marching at their head.

END OF THE FIFTH CANTO.



T H E H E N R I A D.

C A N T O S I X T H.

ARGUMENT.

After the death of Henry III., the states of the league assemble themselves, at Paris, to choose a king. Whilst they are occupied in their deliberations, Henry IV. makes an assault upon the city: the assembly of states separates: those who compose it, go to fight upon the ramparts: description of the combat. The apparition of St. Louis to Henry IV.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO SIXTH. ¹

Sacred, with us, an ancient usage is,
When o'er the throne death his rude strokes extends,
To its last channels when the source is drain'd
Of blood of kings, so dear unto the realm ;
The people, then, their primal rights regain,
Can choose a master and can change the laws ;
Organ of France, the states, assembled, name
A sovereign, and give limits to his pow'r.
Thus of our ancestors th' august decrees
In Charlemagne's high rank the Capets plac'd.

The audacious league, disquieted, and blind,
Dares order an assembly of these states,
And, by assassination, thinks t' have gain'd
'The right t' elect a lord, and change the state.
Screen'd by an imag'nary throne, they deem'd,
Bourbon to easier foil, the commons cheat.
They thought a monarch would unite their views ;
Under that name their rights more holy be ;
That one must be, howe'er unjustly, made ;
That France, whoe'er he might be, will'd a lord.

Straight to that council rush, with mighty noise,
These obstinate chiefs, whom foolish pride conducts,
The Lorraines, and the Nemours, some mad priests,
Th' ambassador of Rome, and that of Spain.
They towards the Louvre march, there by new choice,
Prepare t' insult the manes of our kings.
Luxury, e'er of public mis'ry born,
Prepares, with splendour, those tyrannic states.

There, nor appear'd those princes, nor those lords,
Th' august successors of our ancient peers,
Plac'd near our kings, of France the judges born.
Who kept the show of pow'r no longer theirs.
There of our parliaments the dep'ties sage
Defended not our feeble liberties:
Nor there the lily's usual pride was seen :
With a strange pomp the Louvre is amaz'd.
There, is Rome's legate honour'd with a seat :
Near him, a can'py for Mayenne's prepar'd.
And 'neath that can'py, these dread words were read :
"Ye kings, who judge the earth ; whose guilty hands
Dare all things enterprize, and nothing spare,
Let Valois' death instruct ye how to reign."

Th' assembly meets ; parties, cabals forthwith,
With hellish voices, make those seats resound.
All eyes the blind of error doth deceive.
One, of Rome's favours the ambitious slave,
Bespeaks the legate sole, before him, says :
" 'Tis time the lilies 'neath th' tiara crept ;
At Paris, let that bloody court be rear'd."

That fearful monument of monkish pow'r³
Which Spain hath taken, but which she abhors,
The altars which avenges and defiles,
Which flame-engirt, and cover'd o'er with blood,
With holy steel makes sacrifice of man.
As if we lived within those piteous times,
When the earth worshipp'd mercy-lacking gods,
Whom lying priests, yet more inhuman still,
Boasted themselves t' appease by human blood!

Here one, corrupted by Iberian gold,
Would to the hated Spaniard sell the realm.

But a puissant part, with common voice,
Mayenne were placing on the kingly throne;
That rank alone remain'd his grasping pow'r;
And of his strenuous vows the haughty hope
Devour'd, in secret, in his bosom's core,
The dangerous honour of a king's great name.

³ Quick Potier rises, and an audience asks.
His rigid virtue form'd his eloquence.
At that unhappy, crime infected time,
Potier was always just, respected still.
Oft, by his manly firmness, was he seen
The licence of their rashness to repress,
Preserving o'er them yet his ancient pow'r,
To show them justice with impunity.
He lifts his voice; they whisper; eager are; (*)
Surround him; hear him; and the tumult stills.
So, in some vessel which the waves have toss'd,

The air no longer struck by sailor's cries,
No noise is heard save but the foaming prow,
Which cuts with prosperous course th' obedient sea.
Such Potier, dictating just laws, appear'd ;
And at his voice confusion silence kept.

“ Mayenne you destine to the power supreme :
Your error I conceive and I excuse.
Mayenne has virtues ever to be lov'd ;
And I should choose him, had I pow'r to choose.
But we have laws ; and that illustrious chief,
Is thence unworthy, if he empire seek.”
Whilst speaking thus, Mayenne an entrance makes
With all the show that follows sovereign pow'r.
Potier him entering sees, nor changes look :
“ Yes prince,” continues he, with manly tone,
“ I you esteem, sufficiently, to dare
T' address my voice to you, against yourself,
For us and France. In vain do we pretend
To have the right a master to elect :
France has its Bourbons ; God has plac'd your birth
Near to the august rank they ought to fill,
Not to usurp, but to sustain their throne.
Guise, from death's bosom, nothing more can claim ;
A sovereign's blood his ashes should suffice ;
Him, if he died by crime, a crime aveng'd.
Change with the state that which the heav'n's have chang'd ;
And let your wrath so just with Valois die !
Your brother's blood hath never Bourbon shed.
Heav'n, that just heav'n which cherishes you both,
Ye twain hath made too virtuous to be foes.

But murmurs I perceive and public shouts :
'Relaps'd and heretic,' those frightful words :
Our priests I see, by a false zeal induc'd,
Who sword in hand—ah ye unhappy, stay !
What law, what precept, rather, O what rage
Can from the Lord's anointed tear your vows ?
False to his oaths, comes then St. Louis' son
Our holy altars' bases to destroy ?
He, at those altars' feet, instruction seeks ;
Those laws he loves, obeys, whose rule you brave ;
The virtues, in each sect, knows how to love,
Respects your worship, even your abuse.
He to the living God, who knows us all,
Leaves, what you take, the care of judging man :
He comes to rule you as a king and sire ;
More christian like than you, to pardon comes.
Each one with him is free ; shall he not be ?
Infidel pastors, worthless citizens ?
How badly ye resemble those first saints,
Who, gods of plaster braving, and of brass,
Under a heathen master, plaintless, march'd,
Expir'd not grieving, and to scaffolds led,
There, bloody, pierc'd with blows, their murd'ers blest :
They sole were christians, I no others know ;
You your kings massacre, they died for theirs :
A God, whom jealous, ruthless, ye pourtray,
If he could be reveng'd, it is on you."

None to this bold discourse dar'd answer make ;
By pow'ful strokes, they saw themselves o'erthrown ;
And from their irritated hearts repell'd,
In vain, the fear which truth the vile e'er gives ;

Fear and despite them agitated kept,
When quick, a thousand voices, launch'd to heav'n,
Throughout resounded, with a noise confus'd :
"To arms ! ye citizens, or all is lost !"

Dense clouds, created by the rising dust,
Hid in the plains, the sun's enliv'ning light.
Replete with horror, drums and clarion's sound
Of death, who follow'd, the precursor was.
Such o'er the earth, from northern caves escap'd,
By winds preceded, and by thunders chas'd,
With dusty whirlwinds dark'ning all the air,
The universe the fiery storms o'errun.

It was great Henry's formidable pow'rs,
Which wearied with repose, athirst for blood,
Made heard afar those fear-exciting cries,
Towards Paris march'd and cover'd all the plains.

Bourbon employ'd not moments of such worth
In rend'ring their last king the usual rites,
Or those proud names engraving on his tomb
Which, from surviving pride, the dead receive :
His hands those desolated banks charg'd not
With pompous show of those mausoleums
That, maugre the inj'ry of time and fate,
Make the great's vanity triumph over death :
To Valois, in his dark sojourn, he wish'd,
Tributes, more worthy of his shade, to send,
To punish his assassins, quell his foes,
And, when submissive, make his people blest.

At th' unexpected sound of these assaults,
The consternated states the council leave.
Instant, Mayenne runs to the rampart heights ;
Quick, to his standard, flies th' assembling host :
And, with loud shouts, th' advancing chief insults ;
All for attack's prepar'd, all for defence.

Not such was Paris, in those stormy times,
As in our days, to happy France it shows.
A hundred forts, which fear and rage had built,
In far less space, its compassings enclosed.
These faubourgs, now so pompous and so great,
Which peace, with open hand keeps ever wide,
Of a vast city the proud avenues,
Where, in the clouds, our gilded domes are lost,
Were hamlets long, by ramparts round enclos'd,
From Paris separate by fosse profound.
Bourbon advances on the eastern side.
See his approach ! and how death runs before !
The balls and fire from all parts, fly around,
From the besiegers' hands, and ramparts' heights.
These threatening ramparts, with their tow'rs and works,
Beneath the strokes of such hot storms descend :
Battalions, overthrown, dispers'd, are seen,
And, in the plains, their numbers scatter'd far.
What the ball hit falls, crumbling into dust ;
And either party fights with thunderbolts.

With less art, formerly, in battle-storm,
Unhappy mortals hastened on their deaths ;
They, to the carnage, flew, with less array ;

And in their hands, the sword suffic'd their rage.
Th' industrious efforts of their cruel sons,
Hath robb'd the fire that glows within the skies.
' Those frightful bombs were thundering heard around,
Th' abominable seed of Flander's woe:
Salt-petre, burning, with its brazen globes (b)
Flies with the prison which encloses it;
Breaks it, and death, in fury, from it leaps.

With still more art, more barbarism still,
In those deep caverns, hath been learn'd to shut
Thunders, beneath the earth, prepar'd t' inflame.
'Neath a false path, where, flying to the shock,
The valourous soldier to his courage trusts;
Quick, rising from each overt gulf, appear
Black sulphury torrents, spread upon the airs;
Entire battalions, by this thunder new,
Borne lacerated off, engulph'd in earth.
These are the dangers to which Bourbon goes:
Through these he burns to rush into his throne.
With him, these tempests do his warriors scorn;
Hell is below them, thunder o'er their heads:
But, with the king, they deem that glory flies,
Save it, they nought regard, and fearless march.

Mornay, amidst this rapid torrent's waves,
Advances, with grave step, not the less bold;
At once, incapable of fear or rage,
To cannon deaf, in horror's bosom calm:
He views the war, with stoic glance and firm,
As heav'ns, though necessary, fearful scourge.

Philosopher he bends, where honour leads,
Combats condemns, mourns, but pursues his lord.

Down on that horrid path at length they move,
Whose way a blood-stain'd glaciis render'd vain :
Danger their efforts there re-animates :
They fill the fosse with fascines, and the dead,
On these dead bodies heap'd, they march, advance :
And to the breach, precipitately, rush.

Arm'd with his bloody steel, with buckler arm'd,
Henry flies, at their head, and mounts the first.
He mounts ; and with triumphant hand has now,
Planted his lily's floating ensigns there.
The leaguers stand before him full of fear :
They seem t' respect their vanquisher and king.
They were a yielding to him : but Mayenne
Quickly re-animates their sinking hearts ;
He shows the way, and calls them back to crime ;
Their clos'd battalions press, from every part,
That king, whose looks they dare not to sustain.
Discord severe, with them, upon the walls,
Bathes in the blood, for her that's shed around.
On that sad wall, the soldier, willingly,
Still nearer fighting, bears a death more sure.

Nought then was heard, save wars loud thunderblasts,
Whose mouths of bronze the earth in terroure shook ;
A silence stern, the offspring of their wrath,
Horrific, follows on these roaring bursts.
With arm determin'd, eyes that flash with rage,

Amid his enemies, each opes his way.
They sieze, retake, by effort strong, adverse,
That rampart stain'd with blood, the scene of death.
Vict'ry uncertain, in their fatal hands,
The Lorraine flag, yet near the lilies holds.
The surpriz'd besiegers are, throughout, repuls'd,
Victorious oft, as often beaten back ;
Like to the ocean, lifted by the storms,
Its shores which covers, instant, and which flies.

Never the king, nor e'er his noble foe
So great had been, as in this fierce assault :
Each of them, 'mid the carnage and the gore,
Lord of his spirit, of his courage lord,
Disposes, orders, acts, sees all, at once,
And, with a glance, these frightful movements leads.

Meanwhile the formidable English corps,
T' th' assault by valiant Essex was led on ;
March'd, the first time, beneath our flowing flags,
And seem'd amaz'd, beneath our kings to serve.
They come, their country's honour to sustain,
Proud of the combat, proud to yield their lives,
On those same ramparts, in those places, where
The Seine, of old, their ancestors saw reign.
Where d'Aumale fights, brave Essex mounts the breach ;
Both young, both brilliant, fill'd with equal fire,
Such on 'Troy's walls, the demi-gods are sung.
Around them, stain'd with gore, their friends are mix'd,
French, English, Lorraines, gather'd by their rage,
Advance, combat, strike, die, commingled there.

Thou angel, who thine arm and rage conduct'st,
Exterminating angel, soul of fright,
Which hero's cause dost thou, at length, espouse ?
For whom inclin'd th' eternal scale of heav'n ?
Long Bourbon, Mayenne, Essex and his foe,
Besieg'd, besiegers, equal carnage make.
The cause more just, at last th' advantage had :
Bourbon prevails, at length, a passage gains ;
Fatigued, the leaguers him resist no more ;
They quit the ramparts, and disorder'd fall.
As, from the heights of Pyrenees, is seen
A torrent threat'ning the vale's nymphs dismay'd.
The banks, which its wild stormy waves oppose,
For a short time, th' impetuous shock sustain ;
But soon, each pow'rless barrier overturn'd,
Noise, dread, and death, along it bears, afar,
Proud oaks, in passing, by the roots up turns,
That brav'd the winters and that touch'd the skies ;
Detaches rocks, from the mounts' butling brow,
And, in the plains, the flying flocks pursues.
Bourbon descended so, with hurrying steps,
Down from the smoking walls his hands had seiz'd ;
So, on the rebels dashing, with an arm
Of thunder, meeting, mow'd their guilty troops.
His vengeful arm the sixteen fled, dismay'd,
Wand'ring, confounded, scatter'd by their fear.

Mayenne, at last, commands the gates t' unfold :
Paris re-enters, follow'd by his bands.
The furious victors, torches in their hands,
Throughout the bloody faubourgs soon are spread.

Th' unbridl'd soldiery's valour turns to rage :
Gives all to burning, pillage and the sword.
Them Henry sees not : his impetuous swoop
Before him swift the flying foe pursued.
Victory inflames him, valour bears away ;
He clears the faubourgs, to the gate proceeds :
" Companions ! hither ! bring your steel and fires !
Come ! fly ! and on these haughty walls mount up !"

As thus he spake, from 'midst a cloud profound,
A glorious spirit breaks upon his view :
His form majestic, managing the airs,
Descends towards Bourbon, on the wings of winds :
The living beams of the divinity,
Immortal beauties, on his front, display'd ;
His eyes were fill'd with horror and with love :
" Stop ! too unhappy conqueror !" he cries,
" And wilt thou yield to pillage and to flame
Th' immortal her'tage of a hundred kings,
Thy sires ; and waste thy country, treasures, fanes ;
Thy subjects slaughter, and, reign o'er the dead !"
The soldier trembles ; to the ground he falls ;
The plunder quits. Henry with ardour fill'd,
Whom yet the combat, at the heart, inflam'd,
Seems like the ocean, which now stills, now roars ;
" O fatal dweller of th' invisible world !
In this dread scene, what com'st thou to announce ?"

These words, forthwith, with sweetness fill'd, he hears :
" I am that happy king, whom France reveres,
Sire of the Bourbons, and thy sire, and guard ;

That Louis, who combatted once like thee ;
That Louis, now whose faith thy heart neglects,
Louis, who mourns thee, loves thee, thee admires.
God to thy throne, one day, shall thee conduct ;
Victor, to Paris, entrance thou shalt have,
Not of thy valour, but thy grace, the price :
'Tis God instructs thee, me 'tis God that sends."
The hero, at these words, sheds tears of joy,
Peace, in his heart, extinguishes his rage :
He weeps, he sighs, on bended knee, adores.
With heavenly horror is his soul transpierc'd :
Thrice towards that sacred shade his arms extend ;
Thrice from his fond embrace the sire escapes,
Like a light cloud that's scatter'd by the winds.

Meantime upon that fearful height of wall,
All the arm'd leaguers, all the throng immense,
Frenchmen and strangers, cit'zens, soldiers, chiefs,
Death and the sword around the king lament.
Around his head th' Almighty's virtue shines,
The arrowy tempest scatters, at him launch'd.
He saw, forthwith, he saw, from what dread toils,
The sire of Bourbons came to set him free.
Paris he view'd with sad and tranquil eye.
"Frenchmen," cried he, "and thou, O fatal town,
Unhappy citizens ! people faithless, weak,
How long will ye combat against your king ?"

Then as that star, the author of the light,
After its glowing journey is fulfill'd,
On the horizon's brink beams sweeter fire,

And, larger to our eyes, prepares to fly,
From Paris' walls that hero far retires,
Fill'd with the image of that holy king
His heart, and fill'd with God, who him inspires.
He marches towards Vincennes, where Louis once
Beneath an oak, just laws to dictate, sat.

How art thou chang'd, abode so lovely once !
Vincennes ! nought art thou but a prison vile,
Prison of state, despair's unblest sojourn,
Where fall so often from the height of pow'r,
Statesmen and lords that thunders o'er our heads,
Who live, at court, as in the tempests blast,
Oppress'd, oppressing, humble, proud, by turns,
The people's love at times, at times their dread.

Soon from the west, where shadows form, the night
O'er Paris came, its sombre veils to bring,
And hide from mortals that abode of blood,
The dead, the combats that day's eye had seen.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO SEVENTH.

ARGUMENT.

St. Louis transports Henry IV., in spirit, to heaven and to the infernal regions, and shows him, in the palace of the destinies, his posterity, and the great men whom France should produce.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO SEVENTH.

(*)The boundless grace of God who gave us life,
The ills to sweeten of its transient course,
Hath with us, two beneficent beings plac'd,
Two ever amiable dwellers of the earth,
Supports in toils, treasures in indigence ;
Sweet Sleep the one, and Hope the other is :
The one, when man of his weak frame perceives
The vanquish'd organs spent, sans force or pow'rs,
Comes, nature, by a happy calm, to aid,
And brings oblivion of the pains she bears ;
Our hearts the other animates, inflames
Our rising wishes ; and tho' often false,
Ev'n in deceiving us, true pleasure yields ;
But to those cherish'd mortals, to whom heav'n
Sends her, she doth no faithless joys inspire ;
Of God she brings the promise and support ;
And is, like him, immoveable and pure.

Louis to Henry, both of these invokes :
"Approach my son, ye faithful couple, come !"

Sleep, from his secret caverns hears the call,
Towards those cool shades he softly wends his way ;
The winds, their course stay, silent, at his look.
Prosperous dreams, the offspring fair of Hope,
Bound towards the prince, the hero overspread
With laurels, olives, 'midst their poppies mix'd.

Louis, then taking his bright diadem,
Upon the victor's brow the circlet plac'd ;
"Reign," says he, "triumph, be in all my son ;
All hope, in thee is centred, of my race.
But the throne Bourbon, must not thee suffice ;
Of Louis' gifts thine empire is the least.
To be a hero, conqueror, king, is small ;
If it enlighten not, heav'n gives thee nought.
All mundane honours are a transient good,
Of human virtues the weak recompense ;
A dangerous pomp, that passes and that flies,
Which cares accompany and which death destroys.
More lasting empire, I to thee will show,
To recompense thee, rather than instruct.
Come, be obedient, follow, through new paths :
Fly to God's bosom, and thy fate fulfil."

Both, at these words, upon a car of light,
Pass'd, in a moment, through heav'n's high career,
As through the night the lightning's glance is seen,
From pole to pole to fly and cleave the airs ;
And, as on high arose that burning cloud
Which from Elisha's eyes his master hid,

In a celestial car, by flame engirt,
And bore him far from earth's astonish'd shores.

In the bright centre of those orbs immense,
Which cannot hide from us their space and course,
That day-star shines, by God himself allum'd,
Which on its glowing axle turns revolv'd.
Torrents of light flow from it, without end ;
Shewing itself, it life to matter yields,
And seasons, days, and years dispenses round
To different worlds that circling round it float.
Rul'd by the law which presses them, these stars
Ceaseless approach, then from it seek escape ;¹
And to each other yielding law and aid
Those beams they lend which they receiv'd from him.
Beyond their course and far within that space
Where matter swims, embrac'd by God alone,
And suns innum'able, worlds without an end,
There, through that void immense, their path he opens.
Beyond these heav'ns, the God of Gods resides.

His heav'nly guide the hero follows there ;
There where are form'd those different spirits all,
Who bodies fill and people all these globes.
There, after death, are all our souls re-plung'd ;
From their gross prison set forever free.

There, at his feet, a Judge corruptless calls
Those souls immortal which his breath has made :
That inf'nite being whom we serve nor know.
Him, under different names, the world adores.

Our cries, he, from his height empyrial, hears:
Pit'ing, this lengthen'd mass of error views,
Those vain pourtrayings, human wisdom makes,
Of his high wisdom, in its piety.

Death to him, hideous daughter of old Time,
Th' inhabitants of this sad world conducts :
She brings, at once, the Bramin, and the Bonze,
Profane disciples of Confucius great ;
Secret successors of the Persians old,
The sect'aries, yet of Zoroaster, blind ;²
The pale inhab'tants of the northern climes,
Whom hyperborean seas with ice besiege ;
Those who America's dark forests hold,
Invincible error's vast innumerable race.
Th' astonish'd Dervise, with unquiet look,
At God's right hand his prophet vainly seeks.
The Bonze, with sombre, penitential eyes
There boasts, in vain, his torments and his vows.^(b)

Instantly taught, the dead, in silence, all
Th' eternal sentence, tremblingly, await.
God, who, at once, all things perceives and knows,
Them, with a glance, or pun'shes, or absolves.
Henry approach'd, not to that throne unseen,
Whence issued, constantly, this judgment dread,
Whence these decrees eternal God pronounc'd,
Which oft proud mortals vainly dare foresee.

“What is,” said Henry asking of himself,
“What is God's sovereign justice then on these ?

Will God these punish that they clos'd their eyes
On light, which he from them had placed so far ?
Will he then judge them, like a lord unjust,
By christian law which they could never know ?
No, God created us, he wills all sav'd.
He by all things instructs us, speaks by all ;
In all our hearts, he nature's laws engraves,
E'er sole the same, and ever solely pure.
Doubtless he judges pagans by that law ;
And if their hearts were just, they christians were."

Whilst thus the hero's wilder'd reason bore
View indiscreet, on this high mystery,
From the throne's base itself, a voice was heard ;
The heavens were mov'd, all nature groan'd throughout,
Its accents like those mighty thunders seem'd,
When, from mount Sinai, God the earth address'd.
The choir immortal silence kept to hear ;
And every star rehears'd it in its course.

"To thy weak reason, see that thou return :
Thee, God hath made to love him, not to know.
Let him, within thy heart, tho' unseen, reign ;
He error pardons, the unjust confounds ;
But pun'shes still each voluntary fault.
Mortal, those eyes, when his sun lights thee, ope."

Henry then with precip'tate flight is borne,
Far, by a whirlwind, in the vacuous space,
Towards an abode, dry, shapeless, savage, wild,
The image of detested chaos old,

Unpierc'd by beamings of those brilliant suns,
Th' Almighty's master-pieces, kind like him.
Upon this horrid land, of heav'n abhorr'd,
God hath not shed the germ of life. And there
Death, frightful death, and dire confusion seem
Their domination firmly to have fix'd.

"Oh God what clamours and what dreadful cries!

What smokey torrents and what fearful fires!

"What monsters fly," says Bourbon, "through these climes!

What flaming gulfs beneath my feet expand!"

"The doors of the abyss, my son, you see,

By Justice dug, inhabited by Crime.

The paths are always open; follow me."

They to hell's gates immediately proceed. 3

(*) There lies dark Envy, squint and timid eye,

The laurel-poison shedding from her mouth;

Day wounds her eyes, which sparkle in the shade:

The dead's sad lover, she the living hates.

Henry she sees, she turns away, and sighs.

Near her is Pride, himself who loves, admires;

Pale-tinted Frailty, with her looks abash'd,

Tyrant that yields to crime, and virtue kills;

Blood-stain'd Ambition, wild, unquiet e'er,

By thrones, by tombs, by slaves encompass'd round;

Tender Hypocrisy, so seeming mild,

Heav'n in her eyes is, hell within her heart;

False Zeal, his barb'rous maxims showing forth;

And Interest last, the father of all crime.

These chainless tyrants of corrupted man,
At Henry's sight in consternation seem'd:

Ne'er had they seen him ; ne'er their impious troop
Approach'd the virtue nourish'd in his heart. .
"What mortal," say they, "by his conduct just,
Comes, us to persecute, in eternal night?"

The hero, 'midst these spirits vile, unclean,
Slowly advanc'd, beneath the vaults profound :
Louis him guided : "Heav'ns, what see I here !
That wretch before me, murd'rer of Valois !
Sire, he still holds the parricidal knife,
With which the sixteen arm'd by his faithless hand !
At Paris, whilst those cruel, barb'rous priests
Dare the pure altars, with his image, soil,
Whom Rome absolves and whom the league invokes, ⁴
Him, in its torments, hell, here, disavows."

"Son," answer'd Louis, "the severest laws
Princes and kings, here in these seats, pursue.
Regard those tyrants, in their lives ador'd :
The greater they, the more God humbles them.
He punishes the crimes their hands have done,
Those they avenge not, those which they permit ;
Their fleeting grandeurs death hath torn away ;
That height, those pleasures, those vile flatterers,
Whose complaisance, so dexterously, conceal'd
Truth from their dazzled and deluded eyes,
Truth, terrible, here, their punishment becomes :
Before their eyes she all their vices sets.
See, at her voice, how all those conquerors quake !
In man's eyes heroes, tyrants in their God's ;
The whole earth's scourges which their rage inflames,

Them crushes now the thunders which they bore.
Near them are couch'd those idle sluggard kings,
Imbecile phantoms that a throne disgrac'd."

Their haughty ministers near those kings he sees :
Those evil counsellors specially remarks,
Who, of the law and customs, spoilers base,
Of war and justice did the honours vend ;
Who were the first to venally make sale
Of our sires' virtues honourable meed.
Are ye then here, tender and feeble hearts,^(d)
Who yielded up to pleasure, couch'd on flow'rs,
Without or gall or pride, pass on, in sloth,
Your useless days effeminately spun ?
Shall ye with criminals confounded be,
Ye mortals kind, of virtue, O ye friends,
Who by a moment's frailty or a doubt,
Of many a wise spent year have spoil'd the fruit ?

The generous Henry could not hide his tears.
"If true," said he, "that in this stern abode,
The human race must be in crowds engulph'd :
If of so short a life the fleeting days
Are follow'd, curelessly, by endless pains,
Were it not better, ne'er to have seen the day ?
Blest had they died upon their mothers' breast.
Or if that God severe, that God, at least,
To man too free, had deign'd to take away
Th' unhappy pow'r of disobeying him."

"Think not," said Louis, "that these victims sad,
Suffer chastisements which surpass their crimes ;

Nor that mankind's creator, that just God,
Loves to destroy the creatures of his hands ;
If infinite he, it is in his rewards :
Free in his gifts, to vengeance he sets bounds.
On earth they paint him in a tyrant's garb ;
But here he is a sire who schools his sons ;
The strokes he softens which his vengeance gives ;
Moments of weakness to correct knows not,
Those short-liv'd joys so full of care and pain,
By frightful torments, endless like himself." 5

He said, and in an instant both advance
Towards seats more blest, where innocence resides.
No longer is hell's frightful darkness round ;
But the most pure immortal light of day.
Henry these blest seats views, and, at their sight,
Feels through his soul a joy unknown pervade ;
There, cares and passions trouble not the heart,
And tranquil pleasure sheds its sweetness round.

Love, in these climes his empire re-asserts :
Not that the love effemin'cy inspires ;
It is that torch divine, that sainted fire,
Heav'n's offspring pure, unknown upon the earth.
With it alone their hearts are e'er replete ;
Ceaseless desire they, ceaselessly enjoy,
And, in an eternal ardour's flame, they taste
Pleasures, regretless, without languor, ease.
There, good kings reign, whom different times have rear'd ;
There, are true heroes ; sages true dwell there ;

There Charlemagne and Clovis golden-thron'd
Watch o'er the lilies' empire from high heav'n.

The fiercest adversaries, the greatest foes,
Here brothers are, united in these seats ;
The sage twelfth Louis, centre of these kings, ⁶
Tow'rs like a cedar, and to them gives laws.
That king, whom favouring heav'n our fathers gave,
Caus'd Justice with him on his throne to sit ;
He pardon'd often ; o'er all hearts he reign'd
And dried the tears within his people's eyes.
D'Amboise, that faithful servant's at his feet, ⁷
Who lov'd France sole ; and sole was lov'd by her ;
His master's tender friend, who, high in rank,
Soil'd not his hands with rapine and with blood.
O days ! O manners ! times of deathless fame !
Blest was the realm, the king with glory crown'd ;
All tasted of the fruits of his mild laws.
Blest times return, another Louis bring !

Yon are those warriors, lavish of their lives,
Whom duty, not their fury, e'er inflam'd ;
La Tremouille, Montmorency, Clisson, ⁸ Foix, ⁹
Guesclin ¹⁰ th' avenger, ruiner of kings ;
Virtuous Bayyard, ¹¹ and thou, brave Amazon, ¹²
The shame of England ; and the throne's support. ^(*)

"These heroes," Louis says, "whom here thou seest,
Like thee, shone dazzling on the eyes of earth ;
Virtue to them, as unto thee, was dear :
But church's sons, their mother they rever'd ;

Fair truth their hearts simple and docile lov'd ;
Their worship mine, it, wherefore hast thou left ?"

As with a groaning voice these words he spake,
The palace of the Fates before him stands :
He towards those sacred ramparts leads his son,
And, at his look, the brazen gates unfold.

Time, with prompt wing, and with unnotic'd flight,
Goes and returns, sans cease, to this stern dome ;
And thence, on earth, from his full hands, he sheds
For mortals destin'd, or their good or ill.

Upon an iron altar, there, a book
Inexplicable, of the future dread
Th' irrevocable history contains :
There, our desires th' Eternal's hand mark'd down,
Our cruel chagrins and our frail delights.
There, is seen Liberty, that haughty slave,
Bound in those places, but by unseen ties :
Under a yoke unknown that naught can break,
God, without tyrannizing can subject ;
Attach'd the better to his laws supreme,
As, from her eyes, her chain is e'er conceal'd ;
That in obeying, she still acts by choice,
And laws to give to destiny oft thinks.

"My son," said Louis, "thence it is, that grace
Makes, by mankind, its pow'rful favour felt ;
'Tis from these sacred seats, one day, must come
The victor shafts, to warm, t' inflame thy heart.
Thou neither can'st or haste, defer, nor know

These precious times, of which God sole is lord.
But oh ! how far those times, blest times, are yet,
When God must thee amongst his children count !
What shameful frailties hast thou yet to prove !
And how in ways delusive shalt thou march !
Cut short, my God, those days of this great king,
Those ill-starr'd days which keep him far from thee !"

"What crowd is this which throngs these ample seats !
It enters ceaseless, and still ceaseless flows."

"You see," said Louis, "in this blest abode,
Shadows of men, hereafter to exist :
These living images of futurity
All climes collect, and outstrip every age.
Th' days of mortals, counted e'er their times,
Are ever present in th' Eternal's eyes.
Dest'ny marks here the instant of their birth ;
Of some th' humility, of some the pow'r
The diff'rent changes to their lot attach'd,
Their vices, virtues, fortune, and their death.

Let us approach : heav'n thee permits to know
The kings and heroes who from thee must spring.
The first thou seest is thy son august :
Long he our lilies' glory shall sustain,
O'er Spain and Belgium happy triumph'er ;
But he nor yet his son nor sire shall peer."

Henry now sees, amongst the fleurs de lis,
Two haughty mortals, sitting near the throne :
Under their feet they hold a realm enchain'd ;

Both with the Roman purple are bedeck'd ;
By guards, by soldiers, both surrounded are :
For kings he takes them—"err not," Louis says,
" Without the title having, such they are ;
Both are the arbiters of prince and state."

Immortal ministers, Richelieu, Mazarin,
From altar-shades rais'd nigh unto the throne,
Offspring of fortune and of policy,
To pow'r despotic, with long strides, they march'd.
Richelieu sublime, great, and a ruthless foe ;
Mazarin pliant, sly, a dangerous friend ;
Th' one, with art flying, yielding to the storm, ¹³
The angry waves the other breasting, bold :
Of princes of my blood the foes declar'd ;
Both hated of the realm, and both admir'd ;
By efforts, or by industry, in fine,
Harsh to the land but useful to their kings.
O thou than these less pow'rful, and less vast
In thy designs, thou, in the second rank,
The first of mortals, Colbert ! on thy steps,
Is it, that blest abundance, of thy toils
Daughter, springs forth, with plenty, France to bless.
Blessing a people that would outrage thee, ¹⁴
Rendering them happy, thou shalt know revenge ;
Like to that cheif, the confidant of God,
Who, payment for their blasphem'y, fed the Jews.

Heav'ns ! what a pompous mass of bending slaves
Stand, trembling, at the feet of yonder king ! ¹⁵
What honours, what respect ! ne'er king in France

His people e'er to such obedience us'd,
Him, like to thee, I see, by glory mov'd,
Better obey'd, more fear'd, perhaps less lov'd.
Him, fortunes diverse proving, I behold,
Proud in success, but in reverses firm ;
Th efforts braving, sole, of twenty realms,
Admir'ble in life, but still more grand in death.

Thou age of Louis blest, age nature's self,
Must cover, stintless, with her fairest gifts,
The beautiful arts to France thou leadest back ;
On thee futurity its eye shall bend ;
Their empire there the muses e'er have fix'd ;
The marble breathes, the canvass is alive.
What sages, gather'd in these seats august, ¹⁶
Measure the universe, and read the heav'ns ;
And causing light, in night's obscurity,
Fathom the depths of boundless nature all ?
Error presumptuous, at their aspect, flies,
And Doubt to Truth conducts their footsteps firm.

. And thou, O potent harmony, heav'ns child !
Sweet art that polish'd Italy and Greece,
Thy tongue enchanting, from all sides, I hear,
And, sovereigns of the heart and ear, thy strains !
France ! thou can'st conquer, and thy conquests sing ;
No laurels are there which thy head crown not ;
A realm of heroes shall these climes behold ;
Rushing to fight, I all the Bourbons see.
Conde I view, rising through many a fire, ¹⁷
By turns his master's terror and his aid ;

Turenne the generous rival of Conde,
Less brilliant, but more wise, at least his peer.
Catinat, by a rare assemblage, joins¹⁸
To warlike gifts the virtues of the sage.
High on a rampart, compasses in hand,
Vauban¹⁹ a hundred brazen thunders scorns. (f)
Hapless at court, invincible in war,
Luxembourg makes the island kingdom quake,²⁰
And the proud empire tremble at his name.

The audacious Villars, at Denain, behold,²¹
The Cæsar's eagle for the thunder fight,
The arbiter of peace which vict'ry brings,
His sovereign's worthy aid and Eugene's foe.
What youthful prince is that whose majesty²²
Beams, without pride, upon his lovely face?
He, with an eye indiff'rent, views the throne—
Heav'ns! what quick night enshrouds him from my eyes?
Death, near him, hovers, nor arrests his course;
Before the throne he falls prepar'd to mount."

"O son thou seest the justest of the French;
And heav'n shall form him of thy blood august.
Great God! and dost thou only make to show
To man, thy work, this short-lived fleeting flow'r?
Would he had not that virtuous soul produc'd!
Beneath his reign, France had too happy been!
Peace and abundance he had e'er preserv'd;
By benefits had he number'd all his days;
Had lov'd his people. Day replete with dread!
Oh! how the French around their tears shall shed,

When, under the same tomb, united, they
Shall spouse, wife, mother, son, together see !

A feeble shoot ²³ from forth the ruin springs,
Cut from the roots of that luxuriant tree.
The sons of Louis to the tomb gone down,
A cradled monarch have to France bequeath'd,
Sweet and frail hope of the distracted state.
Oh prudent Fleury, o'er his childhood watch ! (5)
Lead his first steps, rear thou, beneath thine eyes,
This precious, pure, deposit of my blood.
King as he is, himself, teach thou, to know,
That tho' a master, he is yet a man ;
Lov'd by his realm, may it to him be dear :
Teach him he is a king, born but for them.
France ! under him resumes thy pristine state,
Pierce the sad night thy light that shadows o'er ;
O may the arts, which seek to leave thee now,
Here with their useful hands to crown thee come.
The ocean asks, within her grotts profound,
Where are thy flags that floated o'er her waves ?
From Nile, the Euxine, India, and her ports,
Commerce thee calls, and opens all her stores.
Order and peace maintain, nor victory seek :
Enough for glory, arbiter be of kings :
Being their terror, easily will they hear.

Near that young king, with splendour, see advance,
A hero ²⁴ calumny from afar pursues ;
Apt, and not feeble, full of genius, warm,
Too much the friend of novelty, and joy,

From pleasure's breast, arouse and shake the world.
By new resources, active policy,
Torn Europe holds he tranquil, in suspense.
The arts are brighten'd by his vig'lant eyes.
Born for all business, he all talents has,
A soldier's, citizen's, a master's, chief's.
No king is he, but, how to be, he shows."

Then, in a storm, amidst the lightning-blasts,
Rose in the air the standard of fair France ;
Before it, from proud Spain, a warlike band
Broke of the German eagle the high head.
"O sire ! what novel spectacle is this ?"
"All hath its change," says Louis, "all its tomb.
The Almighty's hidden wisdom, son, adore.
Of the fifth Charles puissant lives no seed.
Spain, to our knees, to ask her sovereigns comes :
One of our sons it is that gives them laws.
Philip"—At that Henry remains a prey
To sweet surprise and rising floods of joy.
"Calm," Louis says, "this primal transport calm ;
Fear rather, thou this great event, O, fear.
Madrid from Paris' bosom hath a lord :
Dangerous, perhaps, that honour is, to both.

Kings of my blood ! O Philip, O my son !
France, Spain, in union may ye ever be !
When will ye, unblest politics, again, ²⁵
Of public discord light the flaming torch ?"

He said : and, instantly, that hero saw
Nought, save a thousand objects, mix'd, confus'd.

The gates of Fate's high temple, shutting close
And from before him disappear heav'n's vaults.

Meanwhile, Aurora, vermeil-visag'd, op'd
Within the east, the palace of the sun :
Night her dark veils to other regions bore .
Far, with her shades, the flutt'ring visions fled.
The prince, awak'ning, feels, within his breast,
A new found force, an ardour more divine :
His aspect both respect and awe inspires ;
God, with his majesty, his front had fill'd.
Thus, when of Israel the avenger had
Th' Eternal sought, on Sinai's sacred mount,
Couch'd in the dust, the Hebrews, at his feet,
Could not sustain the lightnings of his eyes.

END OF THE SEVENTH CANTO.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO EIGHTH.

ARGUMENT.

The Count d'Egmont comes, on the part of the king of Spain, to the assistance of Mayenne and of the leaguers. The battle of Ivry, in which Mayenne is defeated, and d'Egmont slain. The valour and clemency of Henry the Great.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO EIGHTH.

(*)Lost had, at Paris, the assembled states,
Confus'd, the pride which had inflated them.
At Henry's name, the leaguers, full of fear,
Seem'd to forget their will to make a king.
Nought had the pow'r their uncertain rage to fix;
And daring not degrade nor crown Mayenne,
They, by decrees unblushing, had confirm'd
The pow'r, the rank, which he amongst them held.

¹ This chiefless deputy, this king uncrown'd,
E'er, in his party, holds the pow'r supreme.
An obedient realm, whose aid himself he styles,
Promises for him to fight, to die for him.
Full of new hope, to council he convenes
All those proud chiefs, th' avengers of his cause;
The Lorrains,² Nemours, Chatre, Canillac,
Th' inconstant Joyeuse, Brissac, and Saint-Paul.³
They come: pride, vengeance, fury, and despair,
And haughtiness are painted on each face.
Some, trembling, seem to drag their steps along,

By blood enfeebled, in the combats shed ;
But this same blood, these combats, and these wounds
Their injuries incited them t' avenge.
They come to range themselves around Mayenne ;
With sword in hand, all, to revenge him swear.
Such, on Thessalian plains, t' Olympus' height,
The impious troop of earth-born sons are sung
As piling rocks, and menacing the heav'ns,
Inebriate with vain hope the gods to quell.

Discord, at th' instant, from a cloud half op'd,
Shows herself to them, on a lum'nous car :
"Courage, says she, for you their succour comes ;
Now must you conquer, Frenchmen ! or must die."
D'Aumale, the first, arises, at these words ;
He runs, the Spanish lances sees afar :
"Behold !" he cries, "the succours here, behold !
So long demanded, and deferr'd so long !
Austria, at length, hath succour'd France, my friends !"
He says : Mayenne advances to the gates.
The succours towards those sacred seats appear
Which death has consecrated for the tombs of kings.

That formidable mass of shining arms,
Those sparkling lances, gold, and brilliant steel ;
Those casques, those trappings, and that proud array,
Within the plains, the solar beams defy.
To meet them, joyful, run the crowded throngs ;
The chief they bless, whom Madrid to them sends :
That obst'nate warrior was it d'Egmont young, ⁴
Ambitious offspring of an ill-starr'd sire :

Life he receiv'd within fair Brussels' walls ;
Blind with his country's love, his sire had died ;
The rights of hapless Flemings, by their kings
Oppress'd, upon the scaffold to sustain.
The son, a courtier loose, a warrior rash,
Kiss'd long the hand that put his sire to death ;
His country's ills, through policy, he serv'd,
Brussels he injur'd, Paris gave his aid.

Him Philip sent upon the banks of Seine,
To Mayenne's aid, a tutelary god :
With him, Mayenne to the king's tents believ'd
He, in his turn, should fear and carnage bear.
A haughty rashness follow'd on their track.
Great king ! how pleas'd did'st thou that rashness view !
How hasten'd on thy vows the hours of fight,
Where seem'd attach'd the dest'nies of the state ! (b)

* Near unto Iton's banks, and Eurus' shores,
A happy plain there is, of nature lov'd : (c)
War had respected there the treasures long
Which Flora on those banks and zephyrs grac'd.
Amidst the horrors of the civil broils,
Their tranquil days the shepherds here pass'd on ;
By heav'n protected and their low estate,
The soldiery's greediness appear'd to brave,
And under their thatch'd cots, defenc'd from fears,
Heard not the noise of drums, or clashing arms.
The hostile camps arrive within these seats ;
Before them desolation stalks around.
Eurus' and Iton's waves a dread perceive ;

The shepherds, fearful hide within the woods ;
And their sad halves, companions of their steps,
Bear off their infants, groaning, in their arms.

Ye hapless dwellers of these charming shores,
Impute not to your king, at least, these fears ;
If he seek combat, 'tis to give you peace :
People, his hand on you would bounties shed :
Your woes he wills to end, you loves, laments,
And 'tis for you this frightful day he fights.
Dear are the moments ; through the rank he runs,
On a swift courser, fleetier than the winds,
That, of his burden proud, with stamping hoof,
Invites the danger and inhales the war,

Near him are seen his warriors, shining round,
Companions of his glory, laurel deck'd :
D'Aumont,⁶ who arms beneath five kings had borne ;
Biron,⁷ whose name alone around spreads fear ;
And his still youthful son,⁸ impetuous, warm,
Who since ⁹—but virtuous was he till that time :
Sully,¹⁰ Nangis, Crillon, those foes of crime,
Whom the league hates, and whom the league esteems ;
Turenne,¹¹ who since of youthful Bouillon
At Sedan, merited the pow'r and name ;
A hapless pow'r and but too ill preserv'd,
(*) And, by Armand destroy'd, as soon as rais'd.

Essex, in pomp, in midst of them, was seen,
Like, in our gardens, the sky-tow'ring palm,
Its high head mixing with our tufted elms,

Its stranger-trunk appears in pride to raise.
With gleaming fires his brilliant helmet shone,
Which gold and diamonds seem'd to emulate ;
Dear precious gifts, with which his mistress proud
Honour'd his courage, rather or her love.
Ambitious Essex, you, at once, exist
Your queen's fond love, and the support of kings !
Further are Tremouille, ¹³ Fouquieres, Clermont,
Th' unhappy Nesle, and happy Lesdiguieres ; ¹⁴
D'Ailly, for whom this day too fatal was.^(d)
Crowded, these warriors wait the signal sound,
And, round the king arrang'd, upon his face,
Presage and hope of a sure triumph read.

Then, too, Mayenne, in vain, disturb'd, abash'd,
Seeks, in his anxious breast, his usual fires :
Or, knowing the injustice of his cause,
Believ'd not heav'n propitious to his arms ;
Or, in effect, his soul those foretastes had,
The avant-couriers e'er of great events.
Meantime that hero, of his weakness lord,
By feign'd alacrity his chagrines hides.
He rouses up, bestirs, the bands inspires
With, what himself had not, a generous hope.

Near him d'Egmont, with confidence replete,
That caus'd imprudence in his youthful heart,
Impatient now his valour to employ,
'The dubious Mayenne's tardiness accus'd.

As, from the laughing pasturage escap'd,
His rage arousing at the trumpet's blast,

A gallant courser, on the Thracian plains,
Restless, indocile, full of warlike fire,
O'er his proud head his flowing mane exalts,
And reinless flies, and o'er the herbage bounds ;
So appear'd Egmont : and a nobler rage
Shone from his eyes, and glow'd within his breast.
Already he his future fame bespeaks ;
Thinks that his fate the victory commands.
Alas ! he knows not that his fatal pride
A tomb, for him, in Ivry's plains prepares.

Great Henry towards the leaguers now moves on ;
His troops addressing, whom his presence fir'd :
" You are born Frenchmen, and your king am I : ¹⁵
There are our en'mies, march, and follow me !
Lose ye not sight, amidst the battle-storm,
Of this bright plume that floats above my head ;
It you shall e'er in honour's path behold."
At these words, as a victor's, straight the king
With a new ardour saw his troops inflam'd,
And march'd, invoking the great God of arms.

At once, upon the steps of either chief,
Are seen to rush th' opposing combattants.
As when from mountains, by Alcides torn,
The flying north winds dash with rapid sweep,
Quick the mad waves, from forth the seas profound,
With shock impetuous, launch themselves in air ;
Far groans the earth, day flies, the heav'n resounds,
And trembling Afric fears the world's destroy'd.

The bloody cutlass, to the musquet join'd,
A double death, on every side, now bears.
That weapon, which of old, to waste the earth,
War's demon, first, invented at Bayonne,¹⁶
At once united, worthy fruit of hell,
Whate'er of terror fire and steel possess'd.
In battle shock they mix, they fight; and now
Courage, address, tumult, cries, fear, blind rage,
The shame of yielding, ardent thirst of blood,
Despair and death, from rank to rank pass on.
A parent one t' th' opposing part pursues;
Slain by a brother's hand one, flying, dies;
All nature groan'd: and that disastrous shore
Drank plenteous, with regret, their hapless blood.

'Midst forests thick of bristling lances made,
Bloody battalions, forces overthrown,
Henry moves on, advances, makes his way.
Great Mornay¹⁷ follows him, e'er calm, serene.
He like some pow'rful genius around him guards, (1)
Such as of old, in Phrygian plains, were feign'd,
Th' eternal movers of the heav'ns and earth,
Mingling in combat, under mortal forms;
Or, such as, of the veritable God
Th' terr'ble min'sters, heav'n decended pow'rs,
Beings impassible of mortal touch,
By winds, by thunders, lightnings, compass'd round,
Who, with unalter'd visage, shake the world.
From Henry he those rapid orders takes,
Th' intrepid movements of a warrior's soul,
Which change the combat and which fix its fate;

Them to the chiefs of legions quick he bears.
Each chief receives them ; his impatient troop
Rules, at his voice's sound, its docile rage.

They scatter, join, in diff'rent bodies march ;
A single spirit these vast movements guides.
Mornay re-seeks the prince, him joins, escorts,
Wards off whilst speaking, blows he would have borne ;
But, still, he suffers not his stoic hands
With blood of hapless mortals to be soil'd ;
With his king, solely, is his bosom fill'd ;
For his defence alone the sword he draws ;
And, his rare courage, enemy of fights,
Knows how to ward off death, and give it not.

And now, th' unconqu'able valour of Turenne
The fear-struck troop of Nemours had repuls'd.
D'Ailly throughout had fear and havoc borne ;
D'Ailly, of thirty years of combat proud,
Who, 'midst the havoc of that cruel war,
Maugre his age, fresh force of manhood takes.
A single chief withstands his threat'ning blows :
'Tis a young hero, in his flow'ry years, (E)
Who, in that bloody and illustrious fight,
Commenc'd of combats the dread fatal course ;
Scarce had he tasted hymen's tender charms ;
By the loves favour'd, from their arms he leapt.
But by his charms of being known, asham'd,
Of glory greedy, to the alarms he flew.
Accusing heav'n, that day his tender wife,
The league detesting, and that mortal fight,

Her tender lover arm'd, with trembling hands,
His weighty cuirass sadly she fix'd on,
And cover'd weeping, with a precious casque
That front so graceful, to her eyes so dear.

Towards d'Ailly he with martial fury goes ;
'Midst whirlwind storms of rising flame and dust,
Acrost the wounded, dying, and the dead,
Each chieftain strikes his flying courser's sides ;
Both o'er the sward together, smear'd with gore,
Launch from the ranks afar, with course assur'd :
Bloody, steel-clad, and, with the lance in hand,
Each other, quick, with fearful shock, they strike,
The earth retains them, shiver'd is each lance :
As in a burning sky, two fearful clouds,
Which thunders bear, within their sides, and death,
Clash, 'midst the airs, and fly upon the winds :
Forth from their horrid minglings lightnings stream ;
Thunders collect ; and mortals shake with dread.
But, from their coursers far, by effort quick,
Another death these hapless warriors seek ;
And, in their hands, the fatal broadsword gleams.
Discord rush'd up ; the demon of the war,
Death, pale and bloody, at her sides appear'd.
Stay your precipitate strokes, ye hapless, stay !
But a dread destiny inflames their rage ;
They, to each other's heart a passage seek ;
That foeman's heart, they know not whose, they seek.
Their steel coats blaze and fly in glitt'ring sparks,
Under redoubled blows, each cuirass gleams ;
Red stains the spouting blood each cruel hand ;

Their efforts yet the casque the buckler stay,
Ward off some blows, and death, as yet, repulse.
Astonish'd by so great resistance, each
His foe respected, and his pow'rs admir'd.
At last, old d'Ailly, by a hapless blow,
'That generous warrior at his feet brings down.
Forever to the light his eyes are clos'd :
Near him, his helmet rolls along the dust ;
His visage d'Ailly sees: O death, despair !
He sees, embraces : 'Twas, alas, his son !
The hapless sire, his eyes with tears bedew'd,
His murd'rous arm against himself uprais'd ;
They stop him : his just fury they oppose :
Tembling, he leaves this place replete with dread ;
His guilty victory he fore'er detests ;
Glory renounces, and the court, and man ;
And flying, from himself, to deserts deep,
To hide his pain seeks earth's remotest bound.

There, whether Sol restores to earth the day,
Or ends his course in ocean's bosom vast,
His voice the pitying echoes makes repeat,
The sad, sad name of his unhappy son.

Th' expiring hero's young and tender wife,
Trembling, uncertain, by her fears led on,
Comes, on these fatal banks, with tott'ring feet :
She searches ; 'midst the crowd of dead she sees,
She sees her husband, and, o'ercome, she falls ;
Over her eyes the veil of death expands :
"And is it thee, dear love ?" these broken words,

These cries, half form'd, are unperceiv'd by him ;
 Again her eyes she opens ; and her lips
 With her last kisses, press the lips she loves :
 Within her arms that body, pale and gor'd,
 He holds, regards it, sighing, clasps, and dies.

Sire, hapless spouse, unhappy family,
 Dreadful example of these furious times !
 Say the dread mem'ry of this fearful fight
 Excite the pity of our latest sons,
 Draw from their eyes the salutary tear
 And may they ne'er their fathers' crimes re-act !

But who thus puts the scatter'd league to flight ?
 What chief, what god has overthrown them thus ?
 It is young Biron ; he, whose courage high
 Amidst their squadrons, cuts himself a way.
 D'Aumale them flying sees, and boils with rage :
 " Halt ! back ye cowards ! whither do ye run ?
 Ye fly, ye comrades of Mayenne and Guise !
 Ye, who should Paris, Rome, the church avenge !
 Recal your ancient virtue, follow me ;
 Fight under d'Aumale, and ye conquerors are."
 Straight, aided by Beauveau, and by Fosseuse,
 By Joyeuse also, and the rough Saint-Paul,
 The scatter'd troops, with them, he re-collects,
 And, marching, animates with look of fire.
 Fortune, with him, returns, with rapid pace.
 With dauntless courage, Biron vainly breasts
 This flying torrent's course precipitate ;
 Parabere dying at his side he sees ;

Fenquiere a falling 'midst a crowd of dead ;
Nesle, Clermont, d'Augenne too have bit the dust.
And pierc'd with wounds himself is near to die.—
Thus Biron was it thou should'st yield to death :
A fate so famous, and an end so fair,
Deathless had made the mem'ry of thy worth. (h)

The generous Bourbon straight the danger saw
When the too ardent Biron was engag'd.
Not as a king or master he him lov'd,
Who merely suffers those who would him please,
And whose unbending pride of heart believes
A subject's blood well paid with but a glance.
The noble flame of friendship Henry felt :
Friendship, heav'n's gift, the pleasure of great souls ;
Friendship, which kings, ingrates illustrious,
Are so unhappy as to never know !
He to his succour runs ; that flame, which guides,
Renders his arm more strong, more swift his flight.

Biron, whom death's dark shades were closing round,
At his king's aspect a last effort made :
He, at his voice, recalls what's left of life ;
All, under Bourbon's blows, are scatter'd, yield.
Thy king, young Biron, tears thee from those bands
Whose blows redoubled had thy death achiev'd.
Thou saw'st it : then rest mindful of thy faith.

A hideous noise is heard. For Discord harsh
Her wrath opposing to the hero's worth,
With a new rage the leaguer bands inflames.

She at their head flies, and her fatal mouth
Makes her infernal trumpet far resound.
D'Aumale is rous'd by sounds to him so known.
Straight as an arrow borne along the airs,
He sought the hero; at him launches sole;
Tumultuous forward rush the leaguer crowd:
Such, in the forest's depths, with hurrying leaps,
Those hardy an'mals, for the combat rais'd,
Fierce slaves of man, and for the carnage born,
Press the wild boar, reviving all their rage;
Ign'rant of danger, furious and blind,
Their warlike wrath the horn from far excites.
The caverns, rocks and mountains all resound:
Thus against Bourbon join a thousand foes;
Against all, he, abandon'd to his fate,
Stands whelm'd by numbers, and by death engirt.
In this great danger, Louis, from high heav'n,
The chief belov'd a force resistless gives;
Like to a rock he is, that threatens the airs,
Breaks the winds course, repulsing every wave.
Who can express the carnage and the blood
With which now Eurys sees its borders spread!

Thou bloody shade of the most brave of kings,
My soul enlighten, speak, thou by my voice.
Towards him he sees his faithful noblesse fly;
They die for him, their king for them combats.
Fear went before him, death his strokes pursu'd;
When fiery Egmont came before his wrath.⁽¹⁾

Long had that stranger, by his courage dup'd,
Throughout the carnage-horror sought the king:

He to his rashness ow'd the path to death,
The honour of him fighting mov'd his pride.
"Come, Bourbon, come increase thy fame, he cried;
Come! fight! 'tis ours to fix the victory."
Thus as he spake a stream of vivid light,
Angel of fate cut through the plains of air:
The Lord of combats makes his thunders heard;
The soldier feels the earth beneath him shake.
Egmont believes the heav'ns him owe their aid,
That they defend his cause and fight for him;
That nature all, attentive to his fame,
His vict'ry by the thunder's voice announc'd.
D'Egmont the hero joins, his side he thrusts;
Already triumph'd, seeing shed his blood.
The wounded king his peril sees unmov'd;¹⁹
As grows the danger, so his courage grows:
For joy his great heart leapt, that, in the field
Of honour, he such worthy foes had found.
Far from retarding him, his wound excites;
On that fierce foeman Bourbon rushing flies:
D'Egmont by stroke more sure is quick o'erthrown:
The glittering steel is plung'd within his breast.
Him 'neath their blood-stain'd feet the horses tramp'd;
Envelop'd were his eyes by shades of death;
His soul fled, raging, to the house of death
When his sire's aspect his remorse arous'd. (k)

Ye boasted Spaniards, erst a troop so proud,
His death your warlike virtue hath destroy'd;
For the first time ye then perceiv'd a fear.

Astonishment, trouble, terror, and dismay
Seize, at that moment, on their troop alarm'd;
It goes through every rank, the army hear:
The chiefs are scar'd, the soldiery dismay'd;
One cannot rule, the other not obey.
Their standards down they cast, they run, o'erthrown,
They utter frightful cries, they clash, disperse.

Some to their victor willingly giv'n up,
On bended knees of him demand their chains;
Others, pursuit escaping, with quick step,
To Eurus' borders carried in their flight,
In the deep wave hasten themselves to throw,
And rush on death which they had wish'd to shun.
Cover'd with dead, the waves their course delay,
And the stream, blood-stain'd, towards its source remounts.

Mayenne, incapable and void of fear,
Tranquil, tho' griev'd, and master of himself,
His cruel fortune views, with eyes assur'd,
And o'er her deems to triumph, in his fall.
Near him d'Aumale, with fury in his eyes,
Fortune accus'd, the Flemings and the heav'ns.
"All's lost," says he, "come brave Mayenne let's die."
"Quit," says his chief to him, "a rage so vain.
You and Bois-Dauphin, at this fatal hour,
Must re-assemble and together bring
What of our scattered forces yet remains.
Follow me, both of ye, to Paris' walls;
And the league's wreck, in marching, gather up;
Vanquish'd Coligny's worth let us surpass."

D'Aumale, him hearing, weeps and foams for rage.
He goes to perform an order he detests ;
Like a proud lion, that some Moor hath tam'd,
Which, docile to its lord, to others fierce,
Its rough head bends beneath the hand it knows ;
Follows him frightful, fawning on him roars,
And whilst obeying, seems to menace still.
Mayenne, meantime, by a quick flight and prompt,
To hide his shame, rush'd into Paris' walls.

Henry, victorious, on all sides beheld
The disarm'd leaguers mercy now implore.⁽¹⁾
The heav'nly arches, at the moment, op'd :
The Bourbon manes through the airs came down.
In their midst, Louis, from the heavenly height,
Henry, at this famed moment, came to view,
To see how Henry would his victory use,
And if he would achieve to merit fame.

Round him, his soldiers, with an eye enrag'd,
Were looking on the vanquish'd, from them 'scap'd.
The captives, trembling, to his presence brought,
Awaiting were their doom, in silence deep,
Terror, despair, and shame, their hapless lot
Have painted in their wild and wand'ring eyes.
Looks full of mercy, Bourbon on them bent,
Where sweetness and where boldness reign'd at once :
"Be free," says he, "you can henceforth remain
My enemies, or live my subjects true.
Between Mayenne and me a master choose ;
To be such see which of us two deserves :

Slaves of the league, or comrades of a king ;
Groan under it, or triumph under me :
Choose." At a conqueror's word, with glory crown'd,
In victory's bosom, on the battle-field,
Straightway appear'd these captives, late dismay'd,
Happy tho' vanquish'd, with defeat content :
Light are their eyes, all hatred leaves their hearts ;
His valour conquer'd them, his virtue chains ;
Themselves, forthwith, they honour with the name
Of soldiers ; and to expiate their crime,
Emulous they join and follow on his steps.

The generous victor hath the carnage ceas'd ;
His soldiery's lord, their courage he repress,
No more that lion he, with gore besmear'd,
That carried fear and death from rank to rank :
He is a god beneficent, his bolts
Left, that enchains the storm, consoles the earth.
O'er that front, bloody, terr'ble, menacing,
Peace had the traits cast of serenity.
They, from whose eyes the light was nearly fled,
To life are render'd by his kind commands :
And o'er their dangers, over all their needs,
Like an attentive sire his care extends.

That messenger of falsehood and of truth,
Who, in her course, increases, and light wing'd,
Prompter than Time, flies over every sea,
Passes from pole to pole, and fills the world ;
That monster, form'd of mouths, of eyes, of ears,
Who sounds the wonders or the shame of kings,

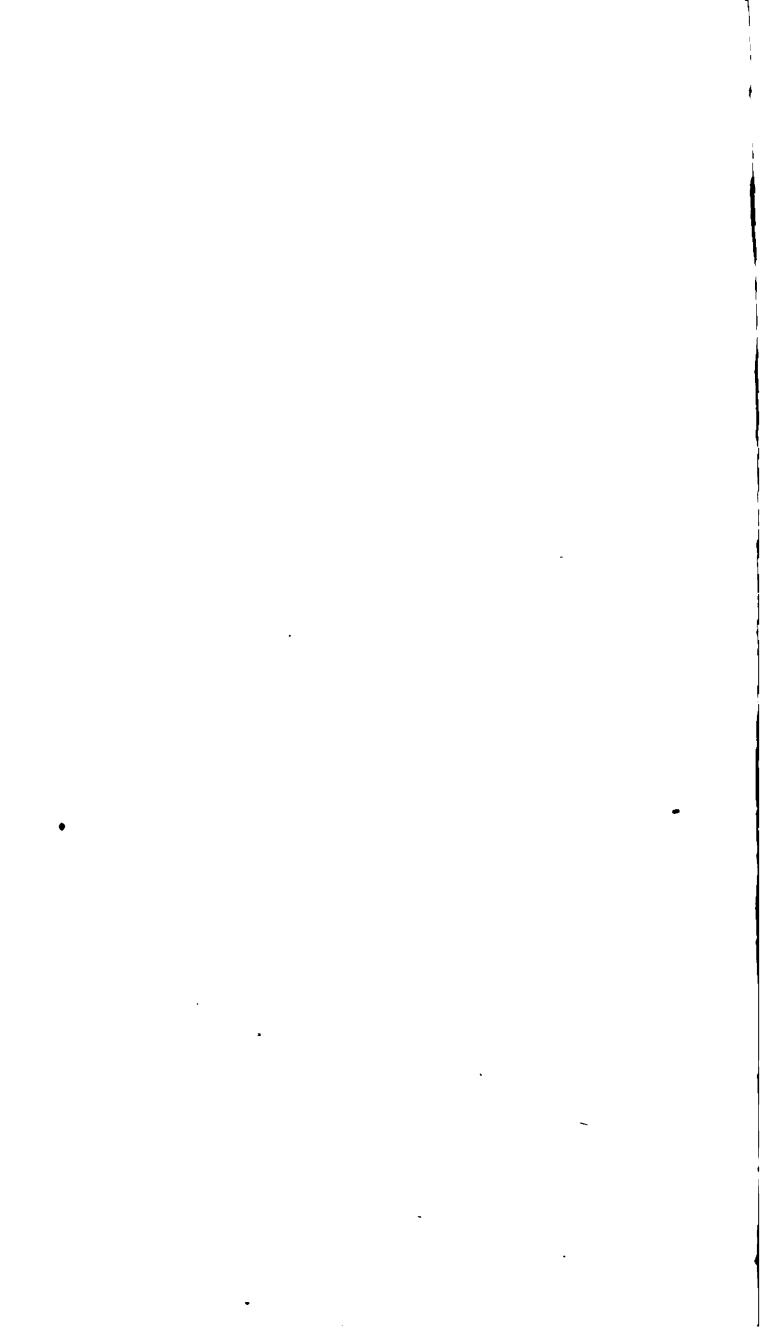
Who gathers round her curiosity,
Credulity, and hope, and doubt, and fear,
With her keen voice, the trump of glory, sang
Thy hero France, announc'd his victory.
From Tagus to the Eridanus borne,
Th' report flew on; and trembling horror seiz'd
And shook in dread the haughty Vatican.
Joyful the north leap'd upward at that voice;
But Madrid groan'd with sadness, fear, and shame.

Oh hapless Paris! leaguers infidel!
Oh citizens deceiv'd! deceiving priests!
How did your fanes resound with dolorous cries!
Forthwith your hands the ashes cover'd o'er.
Alas, Mayenne yet comes to flatter you.
Vanquish'd, but full of hope, of Paris lord,
His able policy, in his deep retreat,
Cloak'd, from th' uncertain leaguers, his depart.
Them he would re-assure from such a loss;
And thinks t' repair by hiding his disgrace.
Their zeal he rais'd by many a false report:
But cruel truth, maugre so many cares,
His false harrangues gainsaying in their sight,
From mouth to mouth flew on, and chill'd each heart.

Groan'd Discord then, and doubling all her rage:
"My work, no, never, will I see destroy'd,"
Says she, "nor will I, in these hapless walls,
Have so much poison shed, such fires lit up,
My pow'r cemented by such tides of blood,
To leave to Bourbon France's rule and reign.

him can I weaken, terr'ble as he is ;
I can effeminate him, if not quell.
Let us no more his valour high oppose,
With useless efforts ; henceforth, from this time,
Henry has nought to vanquish but himself.
Let him his heart distrust, I will this day
Attack him, fight him, conquer him, by it."
She said ; and sudden, from the banks of Seine,
Upon a blood-ting'd car, attach'd by Hate,
'Mid a thick cloud, that made the day look pale,
She flies, departs, and goes to seek for Love.

END OF THE EIGHTH CANTO.



T H E H E N R I A D .

C A N T O N I N T H .

ARGUMENT.

Description of the temple of Love : Discord implores his power to effeminate the courage of Henry IV. That hero is retained some time by Madame d'Estree, so celebrated under the name of the fair Gabriella. Mornay tears him from his love, and the king returns to his army.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO NINTH.

On old Idalia's blest and happy shores,
Where Europe ends and Asia takes its rise,
Rever'd by time, an ancient dome uptow'rs :¹
Nature herself the first foundations laid ;
And art, its simple fabric decking since,
With her bold toils hath nature there surpass'd.
Stock'd with green myrtles, there the neighb'ring fields
Have never winter's outrages perceiv'd.
There all shows ripe ; there springing all appears,
Both Flora's presents, and Pomona's fruits ;
To yield its harvests earth there lingers not,
Or mortal wishes, or the seasons' round. (*)
In peace profound, man there appears to taste
All that which nature, in the world's first days,
From her beneficent hand to mortals gave.
Repose eternal, days serene and pure,
The sweets, the pleasures which abundance yields,
The first age's goods, except its innocence.
Enchanting concerts there throughout are heard,
Languidness whose soft harmony inspires :

The voices of a thousand lovers' songs,
Of their fair mistresses who celebrate
Their shame, and of their weaknesses make boast.
Daily they come, their fronts adorn'd with flow'rs,
Their ami'ble master's favours to implore :
And, in seduction's, pleasure's dang'rous art,
T' instruct themselves, press eag'rly to his fane.
Hope flatt'ring, with her front fore'er serene,
Them to Love's altar by the hand conducts.
The Graces, near that holy fane, half clad,
To dulcet notes their graceful dances time.
Upon a flowery couch, serene at ease,
Voluptuousness their songs soft list'ning hears.
In silence Mystery, at her sides, appears,
Th' enchanting Smile, the Cares and Complaisance,
The amorous Pleasures, and Desires soft
Yet than the Pleasures more seducing, sweet.

Such's of that famous fane the entrance fair.
But, when advancing, 'neath the sacred vault,
Unto the sanct'ary the bold step is borne,
What spectacle of dread appals the eyes !

The lov'd, mild train of pleasures are no more :
No more are heard their amorous concerts ring.
Complaints Disgusts, Imprudence, and wild Fear,
Make of this fair abode a horrid home.
There sombre Jealousy, pale, livid ting'd,
Follows her guide Suspicion, trembling pac'd :
Hatred and Rage, their venom shedding round,
Poignard in hand, before her steps, march on.

Malice them views, and with perfidious smile,
Their homicidal troop, in passing, greets.
Their rage detesting, them Remorse pursues
And, sighing, lowers her eyes, with tears bedew'd.

'Twas there, 'twas there amid that frightful court,
The unhappy company of human joys,
That Love had chosen his eternal rest.
That dang'rous child, so cruel, yet so soft,
Bears in his hands the destiny of earth, (^b)
Gives with a smile or either peace or war,
And, his deceitful sweetness spreading round,
Lives in all hearts, and animates the world.
Viewing his conquests, from his glittering throne,
He tramples under foot the proudest heads ;
More of his cruelties than kindness proud,
He seems t' applaud the evils he has done.

There, sudden, Discord, by wild Rage led on,
Scatters the Pleasures, makes her passage free,
Her burning torches shaking in her hands,
Her eyes inflam'd, her front with blood distain'd :
" Brother," says she, " where are your terr'ble shafts ?
For whom reservest thou thy pow'rful darts ?
Ah, if thou hast, in lighting Discord's torch,
My poison ever with thy furies mix'd ;
If I for thee so oft have nature vex'd
Fly on my steps, my inj'ries to avenge !
A king victorious doth my serpents crush ;
The olive to triumphant laurels joins :
Clemency with him marching, tranquil pac'd,

On the tumultuous breast of civil war,
Beneath his standards, floating from all sides,
Hearts I have scatter'd goes to re-unite :
Another vict'ry and my throne's in dust.
Henry his thunder bears to Paris' walls.
That hero goes to fight, o'ercome, forgive ;
Me will he chain, with many a brazen chain.
'Tis thine t' arrest this torrent in its course.
Of those high deeds go poison all the spring :
Love ! let him groan abash'd beneath thy yoke ;
In virtue's bosom, go, his courage quell.
'Twas thou, (remembrest thou?) whose fatal hand
At Omphale's feet made effortless decline
The great Alcides. Soften'd in thy bonds,
Was not Marc' Anthony of yore beheld,
The care of th' earth abandoning for thee,
Before Augustus flying, on the wave,
Thee following, Cleopatra to prefer
To love of fame and empire of the world ?
After so many warriors, Henry still
Remains to yield a conquest to thy pow'r :
Go blast his laurels in his haughty hands ;
With amorous myrtle bind his lofty brow ;
Let the proud warrior in thy arms be lull'd ;
Rush as an aid to prop my tott'ring throne :
Come for my cause is thine, thy reign is mine."

'Thus spake the monster ; and the trembling vault
Echoed the accents of his frightful voice.
Love, who him heard, 'mid flowery fragrance couch'd,
With a smile proud and sweet his rage responds.

Meantime himself with golden darts he arms :
The azure vaults of the vast heav'n's he cleaves ;
Preceded by the Pleasures, Graces, Sports,
To the French plains he flies, on Zephyr's wings.

First, in his course with joyous eye he views
The weak Simois, (e) and plains where Troy once stood.
He laughs, observing in those seats renown'd,
Ruins of proud pal'ces by his hand consum'd.
Built on the wave, those walls from far he sees,
Those ramparts proud, that prod'gy of the world,
Venice, whose fate the god of waves admires,
And who the seas within her gulf commands.

Descends he there ; on Sicily's fields he stops,
Where Virgil, where Theocritus he inspir'd,
Where once, 'tis said, by novel ways, he led
The wanton wave of amorous Alpheus.
Then quitting Arethusa's lovely banks, (d)
To fields of Provence, towards Vaucluse he flies, ²
Retreats still fair, seats where in youthful days,
Petrarch sigh'd forth his verses and his loves.
On Euru's shores, thy walls Anet he views :
Himself the lofty structure had ordain'd.
There by his hands adroit, with art inlac'd,
The figures of Diana ³ are still seen.
The Graces, Pleasures, passing o'er her tomb
Shed flowers that grew beneath their rosy steps.

At last doth Love on Ivy's plains arrive.
About departing, on some great design,

With war's rough image mingling pleasures' charms,
The king at rest his thunders left a while.
Acrost the downs a thousand youthful knights
With him th' inhabitants of the woods pursued,
Love, at the sight, a joy inhuman feels ;
His darts he sharpens, he prepares his chains ;
He agitates the airs himself had calm'd :
He speaks ; the elements quick arm'd are seen.
The storms invoking from the earth's extremes,
His voice the winds their clouds to gather bids,
To shed those torrents in the air upheld,
And thunder, lightnings and dark night bring on.

Now the north winds, obedient to his word,
Have spread their wings o'er all the heav'ns obscure ;
Night hideous, to a day most fair, succeeds ;
Nature groan'd deep and own'd Love's present pow'r.

In the dank furrows of the humid plain,
The king uncertain moves, sans guide or guard :
Love, at that moment, lighting up his torch,
Made that new prodigy before him shine.
In those dark woods, the king, of friends bereft,
That foe-star follow'd, brilliant amidst the shades,
As oft the troubled traveller is seen
Following those glowing fires, of earth exhal'd,
Those fires whose vapour, transient and malign,
When bright it shines to precipices leads.

To these sad climes but late, the footstep had
Of an illustrious mortal, Fortune, led.

Deep in a castle mur'd, alone and calm,
Her sire she waited, far from war's alarms,
Who, faithful to his kings, in dangers grey,
Had follow'd where great Henry's standards led.
D'Estree ' her name was : Nature's hand had heap'd
Its amiable gifts unmeasur'd her to grace.
Such never shone, upon Eurotas' banks, (°)
The guilty fair who Menalaus left;
Less touching-sweet did she at Farsus seem
Who bow'd the master of the Roman world, °
When the inhabitants of Cydnus' banks,
Censer in hand for Venus her mistook.

She to that formidable age was come,
Which unavoidably makes passion's yoke.
Though high and generous, born to love, her heart,
As yet no lover's vows had e'er receiv'd ;
Like, in her spring-time to a rose new bloom,
Which in the bud its natural beauty shuts,
From amorous winds its bosom's treasures hides,
And opes itself to a pure day serene.

Love, who meantime prepares for a surprize,
Under a name assum'd, draws near the dame :
Without or quiver, torch, or dart he comes ;
And he a child's weak voice and mein assumes.
" We saw," says he, " upon the neighbouring bank,
Come towards these seats the conqueror of Mayenne."
In speaking thus, he glanc'd into her heart
To please that hero a desire unknown.
Her hue was animated with new grace.

Love cheer'd himself in seeing her so fair :
What may he not, by such charms aided, hope !
Her steps, before the monarch's sight, he led. (f)
The simple art, with which her form she deck'd,
Seem'd natural beauty, in his ravish'd eyes.
Her gold ting'd locks, that sport upon the winds,
Now hide her neck, her budding treasures hide,
Now to the eye their matchless charms display.
Her modesty her render'd lovelier still :
Not that austerity so stern and sad
Which puts to flight both love and beauty's self ;
But that sweet chasteness, infantine and pure,
Which the front covers with its blush divine,
Respect inspires, the rising wish inflames,
And gains the conquest and augments its bliss.

Yet more, (to Love no miracle is vain,)
He, by invinc'ble charm, those seats enchants.
With myrtles twin'd, which, from her bounteous breast,
The earth obedient suddenly produc'd,
Those seats around, their foliage spreading thick.
Scarce had he pass'd beneath their fatal shade,
He felt himself detain'd by bonds unseen.
He mourns ; is troubled ; has no pow'r to fly.
'There is seen rolling the enchantress wave ;
There lovers blest, intoxicate with bliss,
Deep drank to duty long forgetful draughts.
Love in those seats, caus'd all his pow'r to feel :
All there seem'd chang'd ; all hearts breath'd in sighs ;
All are poison'd by the charm they breathe ;

All speaks of love. The birds, within the fields,
Redouble all their kisses, fondness, songs.

The ardent reaper, that before morn runs,
Cutting the white ears by the summer rear'd,
Stops here, is agitated, breathes in sighs :
His heart astonish'd is with new desires ;
He stays enchanted in these fair retreats,
And sighing, incomplete his reaping leaves.
Near him, the shepherdess, her flocks unwatch'd,
Her spindles fall'n from her hands perceives.
Against such power, ah, what could d'Estree do ?
She by a charm unconquerable was held ;
She had to combat, on that fatal day,
Her youth, her heart, a hero, and proud Love.

Great Henry oft his deathless valour calls
In secret towards his victor standard back :
Him 'gainst his will an unseen hand detains.
He, in his pristine virtue seeks an aid :
His virtue leaves him ; his inebriate soul
But d'Estree nothing loves, sees, hears, or knows.

Meanwhile his chiefs amaz'd, from him afar,
Demand their prince, and consternated stay.
They tremble for his life : for none could deem
Aught, at that moment, for his fame to fear.
Vain was their search ; the soldiery abash'd,
With him no longer marching seem'd o'ercome.

But the blest genius, who presides o'er France
His dangerous absence, no long time could bear :

At Louis' voice, from heav'n he flies, he came
On rapid wing, to succour of his son.
'Towards that sad hemisphere, when down arriv'd,
A sage to find on earth he look'd around.
He found him not in places long rever'd,
To study, silence, fastings, consecrate ;
He went to Ivry : Amidst licence there,
Where high the victor-soldier's ins'lence swells,
His wing divine France's blest angel fix'd
Amidst the standards of high Calvin's sons :
To Mornay spake, 'Tis for our learning giv'n
That often reason yields sufficient light ;
As when, the shame of christians it did lead
Plato, Aurelius, 'midst a pagan world.

A friend as prudent as a sage austere,
The art discreet to reprehend, yet please,
Mornay well knew. And his example taught
Much better than discourses from his mouth ;
His only loves the solid virtues were.
Of toils desirous, by delights untouch'd,
He on the precipice's brink march'd firm.
Ne'er had the air of court or its foul breath,
Alter'd his austere pur'ty of heart.
Fair Arethusa, thus thy happy wave
To wild Amphritite's astonished breast
Rolls chrystal pure, and waters ever clear,
Which ne'er the bitterness of the sea corrupts.

By wisdom led, the generous Mornay goes,
Departs, flies where effeminacy sweet

Held in her arms the conqueror of men,
And, in him, bow'd the destinies of France.
His conquests, Love, redoubling, every hour,
Made him more blest whilst withering his fame ;
Pleasures, which oft of such short date appear,
Partook his moments, and his days employ'd.

Love, in their midst, with rising anger views
Wisdom severe appear at Mornay's side :
He at that knight a vengeful dart would launch
His sense to charm, and thinks to wound his heart.
But Mornay all his wrath, his charms, despis'd ;
His pow'rless darts fell blunted from his arms.
Private he waits to see the king alone ;
And those fair seats, with angry eye, beholds.

Deep in those gardens, on a clear wave's bank,
Beneath an amorous myrtle, mystic dome,
Free on her lover d'Estree shower'd her charms,
He languish'd near, or in her arms he glow'd.
Of their sweet converse naught the charm could change :
Their eyes were with those happy tears replete,
Those tears which make of lovers' joys the source :
They felt those flurries and inebriate joys,
Those transports, furies, that fond love inspires,
That give a zest which sole he can describe.
The wanton Pleasures, on the breast of ease,
The infant Loves the hero had disarm'd :
One held his cuirass, still with blood distain'd :
One had his formidable sword detach'd,

And laugh'd, at holding in his feeble hands
That sword, man's terroure and the throne's support.

Discord from far his feebleness insults ;
Her barb'rous pleasure she declares in growls.
Her fierce activity these instants rules :
She runs t' incense the serpents of the league ;
And whilst that Bourbon slumber'd and slept on,
Of all his foes the fury she awoke.

At last within these seats where virtue flagg'd
Mornay he saw appear : he saw and blush'd.
Both secretly the other's presence fear'd.
The sage when met, a mournful silence keeps :
But that same silence, and those bow'd regards,
The prince perceives and well he understands.
Upon that face austere, where sadness reign'd,
Henry read easily his frailty's shame.
One rarely loves a witness of his faults.
Another illy Mornay's care had seen : (^b)
" Friend," says the king, " dear friend my wrath fear not ;
Who me my duty shows is sure to please :
Thy prince's heart is worthy of thee still :
I see thee ; it is done ; I am restor'd ;
My virtue I retake which Love had seiz'd :
Come let us fly the scorn of shameful ease ;
Fly from this place, where all my heart revolts,
Still loves the bonds by which it was enchain'd,
Self-conquest is my fairest vict'ry now ;
In glory's arms come let us brave this Love :

And straight toward Paris, spreading terroür round,
Let us wash out, in Spanish blood, my shame."

In these high words Mornay his master knew ;
" It is yourself I see again appear ;
You of all France the proud august defence ;
You your own victor, and your heart's own king.
Love a new lustre to your glory adds,
Blest is he who knows it not, who conquers great."

He said : the king prepares these seats to leave.
What grief, O heavns', his soft adieus attends !
Full of the lovely object whom he flies,
Whom he adores, whilst he his tears condemns,
Here finds himself again in them o'erwhelm'd.
Dragg'd off by Mornay, by his love drawn back,
He goes, returns, departs, but in despair :
He goes. And at the moment d'Estree faints,
Motionless remains, with tint nor life ;
With sudden night her beauteous eyes are spread.
Love, who perceiv'd it, casts a cry in air ;
He fears, he dreads that an eternal night
Would, from his empire, bear a nymph so fair,
Efface, fore'er the charm of those bright eyes,
Which should in France so many fires light up.
He takes her in his arms, that lover, soon,
Opens her dying lids, at his sweet voice,
Calls him her lover, vainly him demands,
Him seek her eyes, and quickly close again.
Love, bath'd in tears, which over her he sheds
Kind to the day, which she had fled, recales ;

With hope, seducing pleasure yields again,
And soothes the ills which he himself had caus'd.

Mornay e'er stern, inflexible fore'er,
Meantime his lord too sensitive dragg'd off.
Virtue and Force the pathway to them shows;
Glory them leads, with laurels in her hands;
And angry Love, whom duty had o'ercome,
From Anet goes, his wrath, his shame to hide.

END OF THE NINTH CANTO.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO TENTH.

ARGUMENT.

Return of the king to his army: he re-commences the siege. Singular combat of the Viscount Turenne, and the Chevalier d'Aumale. Horrible famine which desolates the city. The king himself feeds the inhabitants, whom he is besieging. Heaven recompenses at last his virtues. Truth comes to enlighten him. Paris opens its gates and the war is finished.

THE HENRIAD.

CANTO TENTH.

(*) These dang'rous moments in effem'nacy lost,
Had caus'd the vanquish'd to forget their state,
And for new exploits was Mayenne prepar'd.
The people were inebriate with new hope.
Their hope deceiv'd them; Bourbon whom nought stops,
Impatient flies his conquest to achieve.
Once more alarm'd his standards Paris saw;
Before her ramparts re-appear'd the chief,
Those ramparts where still smoke his thunderbolts,
Walls he cannot resolve to lay in dust;
When, to appease his rage, thy genius France,
His victor arm retain'd withheld his blows.
Now had his camp burst forth in cries of joy;
And with impatient eye devour'd its prey.
Meanwhile the leaguers, with just fear oppress'd,
Were all assembled near the sage Mayenne.
There d'Aumale, of all timid counsel foe,
This language bold held haughtily to them forth:
"We to conceal ourselves have not yet learn'd;
The foe's approaching us; there must we march,

There a successful fury must we bear.
I know th' impetuous ardour of the French ;
Their rampart-shade doth but enfeeble them :
The French attack'd, already are half lost ;
Often despair the battle-field hath gain'd :
I from ourselves hope all, from ramparts nought.
Heroes who hear me, to the field advance !
People that follow, deem your chiefs your walls."

At this he ceas'd: the leaguers, silent, seem'd
Th' imprudence of his hardihood t' accuse ;
He blush'd for shame, and in their eyes confus'd,
Groaning, he read refusal, dread and fear.
"Well ! if ye dare not follow me," he adds,
"Th' affront, ye Frenchmen, I will not survive :
Ye dangers fear ; then I will seek alone,
And show ye how to conquer, or to die."

Instant, he order'd Paris' gate to ope ;
Th' escort of people that surrounds him leaves ;
Advances : onward goes, before his steps,
A combat-herald to the royal tents,
And with loud voice proclaims : "who glory loves,
The wreath of vict'ry let him here dispute :
D'Aumale awaits you, be prepar'd ye foes."

With a brave zeal, the chiefs, at this inspir'd,
Against d'Aumale their courage wish'd to try ;
All from the king th' illustrious honour ask
All of their valour that reward deserv'd :
But brave Turenne that honour bore away.

The king entrusts him with the fame of France.
"Th' insolence of that proud one, go, abase ;
Fight for thy country, for thy king, thyself,
And, parting, arms thy king hath worn receive."
His sword the hero, at these words, him gave.
"Your hope, great king, shall nowise be deceiv'd,"
Turenne responded, as his knees he clasp'd :
"This steel bear witness, by thyself I swear."

He says ; the king embraces him ; he starts
Towards where d'Aumale, impatient, waiting, stood,
Till to his eyes some combatant appear'd.
Then towards thy ramparts, Paris, rush'd thy throngs ;
And Henry's soldiers, near him, rang'd stood round :
On the two combatants all eyes were fix'd :
Each, in th' one of them, a champion view'd,
And rous'd his soul with gesture and with voice.

Meanwhile o'er Paris there a cloud arose
Which storms and thunderings seem'd about to bring ;
Sudden, its dark and glowing sides, wide rent,
Th' infernal furies on those seats sent forth,
Hideous Fanaticism, Discord stern,
Dark Policy, false hearted, and squint eyed,
Battle's wild demon, breathing forth his rage,
Gods drunk with blood, gods worthy of the league ;
They to the city's ramparts sweep ; they stop ;
And for the fight, in d'Aumale's cause, prepare.
At the same time, from th' high open'd heav'ns,
An angel hath, on airy throne, come down ;
Crown'd with bright rays, and swimming in the light,

His swift course wending, on the wings of flame,
And leaving far behind the glowing west
Bright with the sparkling furrows round him made,
The sacred olive, in one hand, he held,
Presage consoling of a peace desir'd.
Gods' steel of vengeance in the other shone,
The steel th' exterminating angel wore,
When erst th' Eternal, to devouring death,
The first born yielded of an ins'lent race.

At that swords' view, confounded and disarm'd,
Th' infernal monsters seem inanimate ;
Terrour enchains them ; an invinc'ble pow'r
• The shafts of their stern troop makes harmless fall.
Thus from his altar, ting'd with human gore,
Fell the proud Dagon, of Philistia god,
When of the God of Gods the ark was borne
Within his fane, and shown his dazzled eyes.

Paris, the king, the army, hell, and heav'n,
Had on that noble combat fix'd their eyes.
Straight the two warriors enter on the course :
Henry of honour's list the barrier op'd.
With on'rous buckler neither arm is charg'd ;
Nor do they hide beneath their busts of steel,
The noble pride of ancient chevaliers,
Glitt'ring to view, impierceable by blows ;
That preparation both neglect, which makes
The combat longer, and the danger less ;
Their arms the sword is ; without other guard,
Expos'd entirely, both to fight advance.

“God,” cried Turenne, “thou arb’ter of my king,
Ah judge his cause, descend, with me combat ;
Courage is nought, without thy shielding hand ;
Little myself can do, thy justice all.”

D’Aumale replied : “I from my arm expect
All things, fight’s destiny depends on us.
In vain, weak man implores a God supreme ;
Tranquil, on high, he leaves us to ourselves :
The justest party is the victors e’er ;
And the war-god the only valour is.”
He said : and with a look of pride inflam’d,
The mild assurance of his rival views.

But sounds the trumpet : forward rush they both ;
The dang’rous combat both, at last, commence.
All that e’er valour or address could show,
Ardour and firmness, force and suppleness
Appear’d, on both sides, in that brilliant shock.
A hundred blows were giv’n and parried quick.
Now at the other, one with fury thrusts ;
Light pac’d, the other turns, and shuns the blow :
Approach’d now nearer, they appear to clench ;
A pleasure stern their glowing danger yield s
To see, observe them, gives both joy and fear,
Advance, then stop, attack, for mastery strive :
Bright gleams the steel, turn’d skillfully away,
And by feign passes mocks the astonish’d eye.
So have we seen the solar brilliant light,
Its fire-beams breaking on the lucid wave,
And scattering still through many a diverse way,

From the mov'd chrystal back reflect on air.
Surpris'd the observer, scarcely daring thought,
Vict'ry beholds, at every turn, or death.
D'Aumale more ardent is, more furious, strong :
Turenne is less impetuous, more adroit ;
Of all his senses master, brave not mad,
At leisure he his terr'ble foe fatigues.
In efforts vain d'Aumale his vigour spends :
Soon his tir'd arm his valour serves no more,
Turenne, who marks him, quick his weakness sees ;
Then he re-animates himself, presses, strikes :
And with a deadly blow, his side enthrusts.

In tides of blood is d'Aumale overthrown:
He falls ; all hell's infernal monsters groan'd :
These mournful accents in the air were heard :
"The league's proud seat is now for e'er o'erthrown ;
Thou conquerest Bourbon ; and our reign is pass'd."
With fearful cry, the people all respōnd.
D'Aumale, unnerv'd, extended on the sand,
Turenne still threatens, but he threats in vain,
His formidable sword escapes his hand.
He tries to speak ; unheard his voice expires.
Shame of being conquer'd makes his air more stern.
He rises, backward falls, an expiring eye
Opens, at Paris looks, and sighing dies.
Thou sawest him die, unfortunate Mayenne ;
Thou sawest and groan'd ; and thy approaching fall
In that sad moment, gleam'd upon thy soul.

¹ Meanwhile the soldiery to Paris' walls
With slow steps back th' unhappy d'Aumale bore.

That bloody spectacle, that fatal pomp,
Amidst a people wild, confus'd, came in :
Each on that mangled body trembling look,
That front, with blood defil'd, that mouth half clos'd,
That head down-hanging, and with dust o'erspread,
Those eyes, where death his horrors doth unveil.
Nothing but cries are heard, but tears are seen :
Shame, pity, with dejection faint and fear,
Stifle their groanings their complaints restrain ;
Silent are all, all tremble. Quick a noise,
Replete with horror that still fear augments.

The shouts of the besiegers rise to heav'n ;
The chiefs, the soldiers, round their king conven'd,
Th' assault demand : but Louis th' august, ^(d)
France's protector, guardian of his son,
Temper'd the terr'ble courage of the king.
So, of the elements the Lord unseen
The north winds holds suspended in the air,
And puts a barrier where the seas may break :
He cities founds, in ruins them o'erthrows,
And mortal hearts are in his hands divine.

Henry whose ardour heav'n had thus repress'd,
Enchains the rage of warriors whom he rules.
He felt he lov'd his ingrate country still ;
He wish'd to save it from its own wild rage.
Scorn'd of his subjects, ready them to spare,
They will'd destruction, he will'd them to gain.
Blest, if his bounty, hind'ring their bold thoughts,
Could bring them miserable to demand his grace !

Able to conquer them, he them invests ;
Time for repentance to their fury leaves.
He deem'd without alarms, assaults or fights,
Famine and scarcity, more strong than arms,
Would eas'ly yield him an exhausted band,
Nourish'd in plenty and to lux'ry us'd ;
Who, by their ills o'ercome, and bent by want,
Must come t' implore for mercy at his knees.
(*) But ah, false zeal, which knows not how to yield,
Them leaves to suffer all things, and to chance.

The rebels whom his 'venging hand yet spar'd,
The clemency of the king for weakness took ;
Dull to his valour, through his bounties proud ;
Their master they defied, their victor brav'd ;
And dar'd his ling'ring vengeance to insult.

But when, at last, the waves of captive Seine
Ceas'd to import into that vast sojourn
The usual tribute of the harvest round ;
In Paris when stern Hunger pale was seen
Already showing Death, who march'd behind ;
On all sides then were frightful howlings heard ;
Then was proud Paris with th' unhappy fill'd,
Whose trembling hand, and whose enfeebled voice
Demanded, vainly, sustenance for their lives.
Quick too experienc'd, after efforts vain,
The rich the famine, in the midst of wealth.
Their sports, their feasts, their fest'vals were no more,
With rose and myrtle where they crown'd their heads,
Where amid pleasures, tasted scant'ly e'er,

Vines the most perfect, viands vaunted most,
Neath gilded walls, effemin'cy's abode,
Quicken'd the sloth of their disgusted tastes.
All these voluptuaries then were seen,
Fearful, disfigur'd, pale, death in their eyes,
Perishing miserably on the breast of wealth,
Hating th' abundance of their useless goods.
The senior who through hunger ends his days,
Beholds his cradled son that died from want.

Here in its rage whole families expire.
There the unhappy, couch'd within the dust,
Are still disputing, in their latest hour,
For the remains of vilest food impure.
These famish'd spectres, nature outraging,
Go to the tombs to seek their nourishment :
And of the fearful dead, the powder'd bones,
As a pure flour, are by their hands prepar'd.
Misery's extremes ! what dare they not attempt !
They on their fathers' dust were seen to feed.
That horrid food ³ did but advance their death,
And that sad feasting was their last repast.

Meanwhile those church-tied doctors and those priests,
Who far from joining in the public woes,
Limiting their cares paternal to themselves,
Liv'd in abundance in their altar shades, ⁴
Preaching the suffrance of the God they wrong'd,
The peoples' constancy went round to cheer.
To some, whose eyes death stood prepar'd to close,
Their lib'ral hands already open'd heav'n :

To others show'd they, with prophetic glance,
Over an her'tic prince the thunders lit,
By numerous succours Paris soon preserv'd,
● And for them heav'n's own manna ripe to fall.
These vain attractions, sterile promises,
The unhappy charm'd more easily to deceive.
By priests seduc'd, by the sixteen o'eraw'd,
Submiss, content, they at their feet expir'd.
Too blest, in fine, in yielding up their lives !

A throng of foreigners the city fill'd ;
Tigers our sires had nourish'd on their breast :
Than death, or war, or hunger, still more stern.
The ones had thither come from Belgic plains ;
The others from Helvetic rocks and mounts,
Barbarians, ⁶ of whom war's the only trade,
Who sell their blood to whomsoe'er will pay.
Of these new tyrants greedy cohorts come
T' attack the mansions, and break in the doors ;
To their scar'd hosts a thousand deaths present,
Their useless treasures not from them to tear,
Not for enforcement, with adulterous hand,
Of daughters, by their trembling mothers wept :
Of cruel hunger the consuming want
Made, in their breasts, all other thoughts expire ;
And the discovery blest of food, tho' scant,
Was the sole object of their fearful search.
No torment was there, punishment, or crime,
To find it, which their rage invented not.

⁶ A female, (ah great God ! and must we save
This horrible recital in our verse ?)

A female by these ruthless hearts, had seen
Torn from her hands, a small remains of food.
Of all the goods that fortune from her reft,
A child remain'd, ready, like her, to die :
Furiously she approaches, knife in hand,
Th' inn'cent child, that towards her held its arms ;
Its infancy, its voice, its woe, its charms,
From the wild mother draw a thousand tears ;
Upon it she her haggard visage turn'd,
With love, with rage, regret and pity fill'd ;
And thrice the knife escapes her falt'ring hand.
Rage at last conquers, and, with trembling voice,
" Dear, hapless offspring, whom these sides have borne,
Vainly," cries she, " didst thou thy life receive ;
Tyrants or hunger soon will take it hence.
Why shouldst thou live ? through Paris' streets to go
Wandering, unhappy, o'er its wrecks to weep ?
E'er thou thy ills and miseries knowest, die ?
Give me this day the blood thy mother gave :
Let my unhappy bosom be thy tomb,
And Paris see, at least, one more new crime !"

These words achieving, furious, and wild,
In her son's side her desperate hand enthrusts,
Groaning, enthrusts the parricidal steel ;
Quick to the fire the bloody body brings :
And with an arm that pit'less hunger forc'd,
Prepares, with greediness, that fearful feast.

Those soldiers stern, by hunger hither drawn,
Here to these guilty seats their steps retrace :

Like to the cruel joy, their transport is,
Of bears or lions pouncing on their prey ;
Struggling together, they in fury run,
They burst the door. O terroure ! O surprise !
A blood-stain'd body near, to sight appears
A woman, wild, and dripping with its gore.
"Yes 'tis my child, ye heartless monsters, yes,
'Tis ye who in its blood have dipp'd my hands :
Let son and mother serve for your repast :
To outrage nature fear ye more than I ?
What horroure seems to freeze ye in my eyes ?
Tigers ! such feastings are for you prepar'd."

These words insensate, by her rage pronounc'd,
A poignard follows which her heart enthrusts.
With fear and horroure, at the sight, amazed,
And terroure, rush those monsters, wild, away.
On that unhappy house they dare not look ;
They think heav'n's fire on them about to fall :
The people at their hapless lot dismay'd,
Lifted to heav'n their hands, and ask'd to die.

To the king's tent a thousand rumours flew :
His heart was touch'd, o'er them his bowels yearn'd ;
And o'er that faithless band his tears he shed ;
"O God !" cried he, "who readest all our hearts,
Who see'st my pow'r, and knowest what I can dare,
The cause thou separat'st of the league and me.
Still to thy throne I spotless hands can raise ;
Thou knowest it, I to these rebels offer'd grace.
Their ills, their crimes, thou dost not charge to me.

Let Mayenne immolate them at his will ;
Let him to dire necessity impute,
Th' excuse of tyrants, if he will, these woes :
The mis'ries of my misled subjects heap ;
He is their foe ; but I must be their sire.
I am ; 'tis mine my children to sustain,
To snatch my people from devouring wolves :
Must they then by my benefits be arm'd ?
Must I to save them lose my diadem ?
I will it ; let them live ; no odds the price !
Maugre themselves, them let us save and tear
Out of the hands of their true enemies ;
And if this too great pity cost my realm,
Upon my tomb let this at least be read :
Henry, his subject's greatest enemy,
Perefer'd to save them, than to give them rule."

' He says ; and straight his army bids approach,
Silently to that famish'd city's walls,
To carry to its tenants words of peace,
And 'stead of vengeance talk of benefits.
Instant the troops obeyed that word divine.
At the same time the people fill'd the walls :
Advancing on the ramparts, with slow steps,
Were seen their trembling, livid, lifeless forms,
Such as is feign'd erst from the sombre realms
The shades the Magi, at their will brought forth,
When their voice, stopping Cocytus' streams,
Hell's depths appeal'd, and call'd the wand'ring ghosts.

How great th' amazement of these dying men !
Their cruel foe to nourish them appears.
By their defenders fierce, tormented torn,
'They in their persecutors pity find.
Incredible to them these things appear.
Those fearful pikes before their eyes they see,
Those shafts, the instruments of cruel fate,
Those lances, which had ever carried death,
Assisting Henry's generous desires,
On their steel's bloody points, them bearing life.
"Are these," said they, "those monsters then so stern !
The tyrant this, so terrible to man ?
That foe of God depaint, so full of rage ?
No ! 'tis the brilliant image of our God ;
Pattern for kings, a king beneficent ;
We merit not to live beneath his laws.
He triumphs, pardons, who offends him feeds.
Can all our blood his potency cement !
Worthy that death from which he us preserves,
Days he thus saves let's consecrate to him."

Such was the language of their melting hearts.
But who can on the fickle throng depend,
Whose feeble friendship in weak words exhales,
That often rises, but fore'er falls back ?

The priests, whose fatal eloquence so oft
Those fires rekindle, which consum'd fair France,
Display their pomp before the mob depress'd.
"Ye feeble warriors, christians but in name,
By what vile bait deign ye to be deceiv'd ?

Forget ye then the palms of martyrdom ?
Soldiers of God, desire ye then to die,
To outrage him, having pow'r for him to die ?
When God from heav'n to us a crown displays
A tyrants' pardon, christians, wait not we :
To his vile sect he wishes us to join :
Him let us punish by the gifts he sends.
From heretic worship let us save our fanes."

'Twas thus they spake ; and their fanatic voice,
The people's mistress, fear'd by kings themselves,
Silenc'd the voice of Henry's benefits ;
And some, again resuming all their rage,
Themselves accus'd for owing life to him. (d)

Through all these clamours and these odious cries,
Great Henry's virtue penetrated heav'n.
Louis, who, from its loftiest arch divine,
The Bourbons guards, whose origin he is,
Knew that the times were near to be fulfill'd,
And that the King of Kings his son had claim'd.
Straight from his heart he chas'd away all fear :
Faith came to dry his eyes with tears bedew'd ;
And hope enchanting and paternal love,
Towards the Eternal footstool led his way.

Amid the splendours of pure endless light,
E'er time, his throne immoveable God fix'd :
Heav'n is beneath his feet ; him to the world
The reg'lar course of myriad stars announce.

Pow'r, love, and wisdom, to perfection rais'd,
United and divided form him one.
His saints, in sweets of an eternal peace,
Intoxicated e'er with streams of bliss,
Fill'd with his glory, with himself surcharg'd,
Emulous, adore the majesty supreme.
(* Before him stand those Gods, bright Seraphims,
To whom the universe's fate he trusts.

He speaks, they fly to change the face of earth ;
Of mundane pow'rs 'tis theirs to stay the course,
Whilst mortals weak, the sport of error vile,
Of th' eternal counsels blame the pride.
Their hand it was that, striking subject Rome,
Italy deliver'd to the north's fierce sons ;
To th' Ottomans Solyma, and to Afric Spain :
All realms have fall'n, their tyrants all have had.
But this inscrutable, just, Providence
Ins'lence to prosper ever, suffers not ;
Oft, favourable to man, its bounty hath,
In innocent hands the kingly sceptre put.

Before his eyes the sire of Bourbons stands,
And with a groaning voice bespeaks him thus :
" Sire of the universe, if e'er thine eyes
Honour or realms or kings with a regard,
Look on the French rebellious to their prince ;
Breaks he thy law, 'tis to be true to thee :
By his zeal blinded, he thee disobey's,
And thinks, when he betrays thee, thee to serve.

See that triumphant king, that bolt of war,
The example, terrour, and the love of earth ;
With virtues, thus, hast thou then form'd his heart
But to abandon him to errour's snares ?
Must the most perfect work then of thy hands
The God he loves a guilty off'ring bring ?
If the great Henry knows thy worship hot,
By whom will th' King of Kings then be ador'd ?
Enlighten, Lord, his heart, thee born to know :
A master give to France, the church a son ;
The obstinate leaguers' vain designs confound ;
Restore a prince his realm, a realm its prince :
Let all united hearts thy justice praise,
And thee, at Paris, the same offerings bring."

By these desires God deign'd then to be mov'd ;
A word his mouth gave forth t' assure the saint.
The stars mov'd trembling at his voice divine ;
The huge earth leapt, the leaguers stood in awe.
The king, who e'er on heav'n had leant for aid,
Felt the Most High for him an int'rest took.

Truth on a sudden, so long time desir'd,
E'er dear to mortals, but so oft unknown,
To the king's tent descends from heav'n's high arch.
At first thick veils conceal her from all eyes :
Then, by degrees, the shades, which hide her, fly
And yield to light the fires these half conceal.
Soon to his view she shows herself in full,
Clad with a glory which ne'er dazzled, plain.

Henry, whose heart so great was form'd for her,
Sees, knows, at last, and loves her deathless light.
With faith, avows he, that religion is (†)
To man superiour, and his sense confounds.
T'ue church below, here militant, he own'd,
The church e'er one, and reaching every where,
Free, but beneath one chief, adoring, all,
In the saint's bliss the grandeur of its God.
Christ, of our sins the daily victim born,
Of his elect belov'd the living food,
Upon the altars, to his eyes, descends,
And, in the mystic loaf, the God reveals.
His heart, submissive, yields itself, gives up
To those high mysteries which amaze his soul.

At this time, Louis, every wish complete,
Holding the peaceful olive in his hand,
Toward him; he loves, from heav'n's high arch descends ;
Himself conducts him unto Paris' walls.
Those shaking walls gape widely, at his voice ;
He enters, * in God's name, by whom kings reign.
The leaguers, lost, and throwing down their arms,
Before him fall, and bathe his feet with tears :
The priests are mute ; the sixteen, seiz'd with dread,
In vain, for flight, some desert caverns seek.
The people all, chang'd on this blissful day,
Own'd their true king, their vanquisher, and sire.

Thenceforth the world admir'd his reign serene,
Too early finish'd, and too late commenc'd.

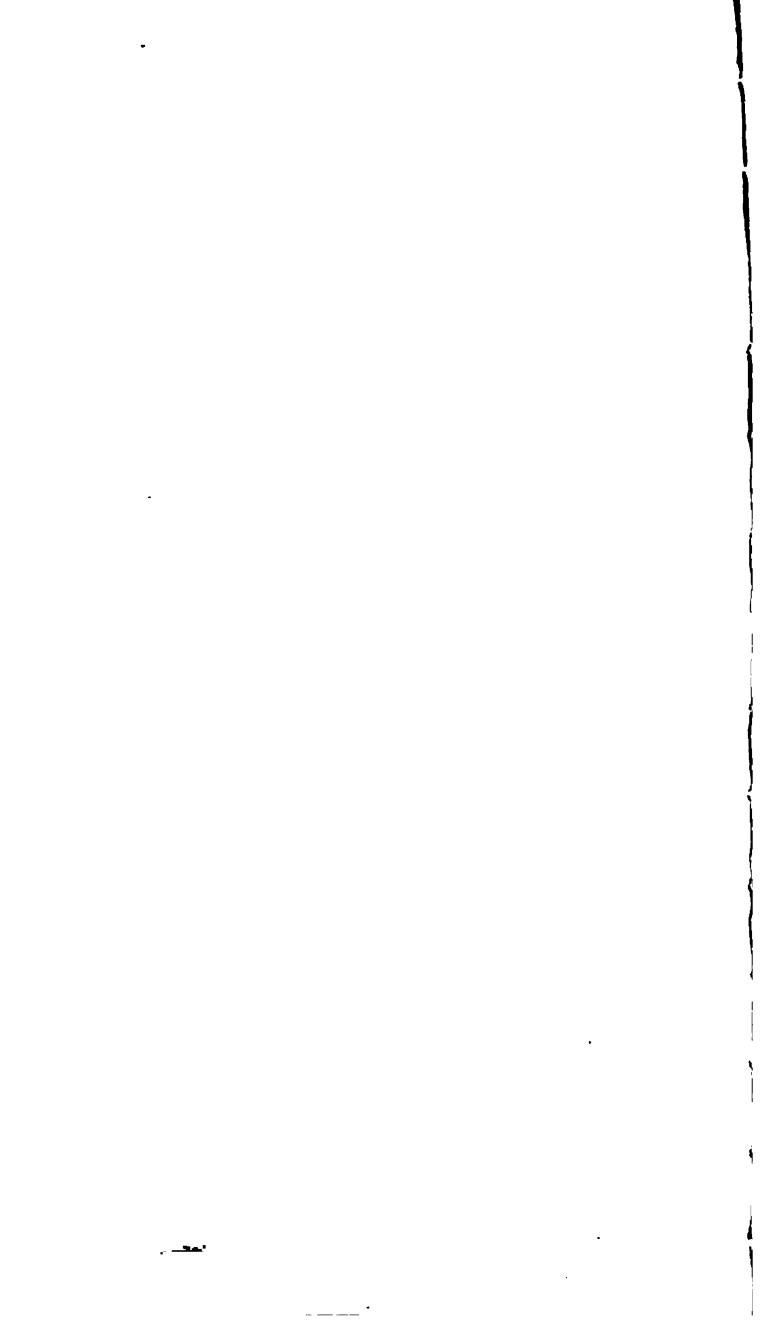
The Austrian trembled. And disarm'd, high Rome
Adopted Bourbon, saw herself belov'd.
Discord re-enter'd into endless night.
To own a king Mayenne was then reduc'd ;
His provinces and heart submitting, made
The best of subjects and the noblest prince.

END OF THE HENRIAD.

NOTES

AND

VARIATIONS.



NOTES OF VOLTAIRE

ON

THE HENRIAD.

NOTES ON THE FIRST CANTO.

1 Henry III., king of France, one of the principal personages of this poem, is always called in it Valois, the name of the royal branch from which he sprang.

2 Henry III., (Valois,) whilst Duke d'Anjou, had commanded the armies of Charles IX., his brother, against the protestants, and had gained, at eighteen, the battles of Jarnac and Moncontour.

3 The Duke d'Anjou was elected king of Poland by the machinations made use of by John de Montluc, bishop of Valencia, ambassador of France in Poland; and Henry went with regret to receive that crown: however, being apprized, in 1574, of the death of his brother, he delayed not returning to France.

4 These were they who were called the minions of Henry III., Saint-Luc, Livarot, Villequier, Duguast, and Maugiron shared, likewise, in his favour and in his debauches. It is certain that he had for Quelus a passion capable of the greatest excess. In his early youth he had already been reproached for his tastes: he had entertained a friendship very equivocal for that same Duke of Guise whom he afterwards slew at Blois. Doctor Boucher, in his book, "*De justa Henrici Tertii abdicatione*," dares advance that the hatred of Henry III. for the Cardinal de Guise had no other foundation than the refusal he had

undergone in his youth ; but that relation resembles all the other calumnies with which the book of Boucher is filled.

Henry III., with his minions, blended religion and debauchery together ; he formed with them retreats, performed some pilgrimages, and gave himself the discipline. He instituted the confraternity of death, either for the death of one of his minions, or for that of the Princess de Conde his mistress : the capuchins and the monks were the directors of the lay-brothers, amongst whom he admitted some citizens of Paris ; these brothers were clad in a robe of black coarse cloth, with a cowl. In another brotherhood, on the contrary, which was that of the white penitents, he admitted none but his courtiers. He was persuaded, as well as certain theologians of his time, that these mummeries expiated habitual sins : it was held that the statutes of the lay-brothers, their habits, their rules, were the emblems of his loves, and that the poet Desportes, Abbe de Tyron, one of the finest courtiers of the times, had explained them in a book which he afterwards cast into the flames.

Henry III. lived moreover in the effeminacy and in the affectation of a female coquette ; he reclined in gloves of a particular kind of skin, at night, to preserve the beauty of his hands, which he in fact had more beautiful than all the women of his court ; and he put upon his visage a prepared paste, and a kind of mask over it : It is thus the book of Hermaphrodites speaks, which circumstantially relates the least details of his lying down, of his rising, of his habiliments. He had a scrupulous exactness in the propriety of his attire : he was so attached to these minutiae, that he one day chased the Duke d'Epemon from his presence, because he had presented himself before him without white pumps and with a habit illy buttoned.

Quelus was slain in a duel the 27th of April, 1578. Louis de Maugiron, Baron d'Ampus, was one of the minions for whom Henry III. had the greatest weakness : he was a young man of great courage and of great hopes. He had performed some very handsome actions at the siege of Issoire, where he had experienced the misfortune of losing an eye. That disgrace left him still sufficient charms to be infinitely to the taste of the king ; he was compared to the Princess d'Eboli, who being one-eyed like him, was at the same time the mistress of Philip II., king of Spain.

It is said that it was for that princess, and for Maugiron, that an Italian made these four verses, since revised.

"Lumine Acon dextro, capta est Leonida sinistro,

"Et poterat formâ vincere uterque deos :

"Parve puer, lumen quod habes concede puellae ;

"Sic tu cæcus amor, sic erit illa Venus."

**"Acon with his right eye enslaves, Leonida with her left,
And conquest either hath in form from every god bereft :
O lovely boy, the light thou hast, concede thou to the dame ;
Thus thou blind Love we then may call, and Venus her may
name."**

Maugiron was slain serving Quelus in his quarrel. Paul Stuart de Caussade de St Maigrim, a gentleman of Bordeaux, was beloved of Henry III. as much as Quelus and Maugiron, and died in a manner as tragical ; he was assassinated the 21st July of the same year, in the street St Honore about eleven o'clock at night, on returning from the Louvre. He was carried to the same hotel de Boissy, where his two friends had died ; he died on the morrow of thirty-four wounds which he received that night. The Duke de Guise, (Balafre,) was suspected of that assassination, as St. Maigrim had boasted of having slept with the Duchess de Guise. The memoirs of the times report that the Duke de Mayenne was recognized amongst the assassins, by his large beard and his hand made like a shoulder of mutton. The Duke de Guise did not however pass for a man very severe in regard to the conduct of his wife ; and it does not bear a face that the Duke de Mayenne, who had never committed a base action, should have so far debased himself as to mix in a troop of twenty assassins to slay a single man.

The king kissed St. Maigrim, Quelus, and Maugiron, after their death, had them shaved, and preserved their flaxen locks ; he, with his own hand, took off from Quelus the earlets he had himself put upon him. M. de l'Etoile says that these three minions died without any religion ; Maugiron blaspheming ; Quelus saying every moment : "Ah, my king, my king !" without saying a single word about Jesus Christ, nor of the Virgin. They were buried at St. Paul's : the king had three marble tombs erected for them, in that church, on which were their figures, kneeling ; their tombs were charged with epitaphs, in prose and verse, in Latin and in French : Maugiron was compared to Horatius Cocles and to Hannibal, because he was one-eyed, like them. We do not relate those epitaphs here, though they are only found in the antiquities of Paris, printed under the reign of Henry III. There is nothing very good or

remarkable in those monuments ; the best of them is the epitaph of Quelus.

“ Non injuriam, sed mortem patienter tulit.”

Not injury, but death he patient bore.

(See on Joyeuse the notes of the third canto.)

5 Henry IV., the hero of this poem, is called in it, indifferently, Bourbon or Henry.

He was born at Pau, in Bearne, the 13th Dec. 1553.

6 St. Louis, the ninth of the name, king of France, is the stock of the Bourbon branch.

7 Henry IV., king of Navarre, had been solemnly excommunicated by Pope Sextus V. about the year 1585, three years before the event which is here mentioned. The pope, in his bull, calls him “bastard, and detestable generation of the house of Bourbon;” he deprives him, and all the house of Conde forever, of all their domains and fiefs, and declares them throughout incapable of succeeding to the crown. Though at that time the king of Navarre and the Prince de Conde were in arms at the head of the protestants, the parliament, always attentive to preserve the honour and the liberties of the state, made the strongest remonstrances against that bull ; and Henry IV. caused it to be affixed, at Rome, to the door of the Vatican, that Sextus V., self-styled pope, had lied, and that it was himself who was a heretic, &c.

8 That was Henry, Prince de Conde, son of Louis, slain at Jarnac. Henry de Conde, was the hope of the protestant party. He died at St. John d'Angeley, at the age of thirty-five, in 1585. His wife, Charlotte de la Tremouille, was accused of his death. She was pregnant three months when her husband died, and lay in, six months after, of Henry de Conde, second of the name, whom a popular and ridiculous tradition relates to have been born thirteen months after the death of his father.

Larrey has followed that tradition in his history of Louis XIV. ; a history where style, truth, and good sense are equally neglected.

9 Duplessis-Mornay, the most virtuous, and the greatest man of the protestant party, was born at Buy, the 5th of Nov., 1549.

He understood the Latin and Greek perfectly, and the Hebrew as well as it can be understood; which, at that time, was a prodigy in a gentleman. He served his religion and his master with his pen and his sword. It was he, whom Henry IV., whilst king of Navarre, sent to Elizabeth, queen of England. He had never any other instructions from his master than a blank commission. He succeeded in nearly all his negotiations, because he had a true, and not an intriguing policy. His letters pass for being written with much force and wisdom. When Henry IV. had changed his religion, Duplessis-Mornay reproached him bitterly, and retired from his court. He was called the pope of the huguenots. All that is said of his character, in the poem, is conformable to history.

The reason which induced the author to choose the personage of Mornay is the philosophic character that belongs to him, which is found developed in the eighth canto :

* * * * *

. And in the sixth canto :

* * * * *

10 Julius Cæsar, being in Epirus, at the city of Apollonia, at present Ceres, stole off privately, and embarked upon the little river of Bolia, which was then called Anius. He threw himself, alone, at night, into a twelve oared bark, to go and seek his troops which were in the kingdom of Naples. He experienced a furious tempest. (See Plutarch.)

11 It is at Westminster that the parliament of England assembles : the concurrence of the house of commons, of that of peers, and the consent of the king are necessary to make laws.

12 The Tower of London is an old castle, built near the Thames, by William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy.

13 Those who do not approve of the author's having supposed this voyage of Henry IV. to England, may say that it does not appear to be permissible thus to mingle fiction with the truth of recent history; that those who are acquainted with the history of France must be shocked, and the ignorant led into error; that if fictions have the right of entrance into epic poems, it is necessary that the reader easily recognize them as such; that when we personify the passions, when we paint Discord and Policy going from Rome to Paris, Love enchaining Henry IV.,

&c., nobody can be deceived in these pictures; but that when we see Henry IV. passing the sea to demand succours from a princess of his religion, we can easily believe that that prince, in truth made such voyage; that, in a word, such an episode ought to be less regarded as an imagination of the poet than as a falsehood of the historian.

Those who are of a contrary opinion may oppose that it is not only permitted a poet, to alter history in facts which are not material, but that it is impossible for him not to do it; that there never was an event in the world, so disposed by chance, that it could be made an epic poem of without any change; that it is unnecessary to be more scrupulous in a poem than in tragedy, where the liberty of these changes is pushed very far; for if we be too servilely attached to history, we must fall into the fault of Lucain, who has made a gazette in verse instead of an epic poem. In truth it would have been ridiculous to have transposed the principal events, events depending upon each other, to place the battle of Ivry before the battle of Coutras, and St. Barthelemi before the Barricades. But we may well make Henry pass secretly into England, without that voyage, which the Parisians themselves are supposed ignorant of, changing in any thing the course of historical events. Those very readers who are shocked that he is caused to make a passage over the sea of a few leagues, would not be at all astonished were he made to go into Guienne, which is four times as far. That if Virgil has made Æneas come into Italy, where he never did come; if he has made him in love with Dido who lived three hundred years after him, we may without scruple make Henry IV. and Queen Elizabeth meet, who esteemed each other, and ever had a great desire of an interview. Virgil, it will be said, spake of a time very remote: that is true; but these events, as distant as they were in antiquity, were well known. The Iliad and the History of Carthage were as familiar to the Romans as more recent histories are to us: it is as permissible to a French poet to deceive the reader a few leagues, as for Virgil to deceive him with three hundred years. In fine, this mixture of history and fable is a rule, established and followed, not only in all poems, but in all romances. They are filled with adventures which, in truth, are not related in history but which are not contradicted by it. It will suffice to establish the voyage of Henry to England, to find a time where history does not give that prince other occupation. Now it is certain that after the death of the Guises, Henry could have made that voyage, which is not more than fif-

teen days at farthest, and may easily be performed in eight. Moreover, that episode has still more the appearance of truth, as Queen Elizabeth sent, in effect, six months after, to Henry the Great, four thousand Englishmen. Besides it may be remarked, that Henry IV., the hero of the poem, is the only one who could worthily relate the history of the court of France, and that there were few except Queen Elizabeth that should be the auditor. Finally it becomes a matter of enquiry whether the things which Henry IV. and Queen Elizabeth converse upon, are sufficiently good to excuse that fiction in the spirit of those who condemn it, and to authorize those who approve of it.

VARIATIONS OF THE FIRST CANTO.

(a) The first edition, printed in 8vo., in 1723, commenced thus:

Combats I sing, and of that glorious king
Who, happy to become, the French compell'd,
The league who scatter'd, made Iberia quake,
Who was his subjects' vanquisher and sire,
In conquer'd Paris made his laws ador'd,
A pattern was for kings, the world's delight.

Recount to me, O muse, what rooted hate
Arm'd against Henry, France in mutiny,
And rushing to destruction, how our sires
Preferr'd their tyrants to the best of kings.

We will relate a singular anecdote on the subject of this variation.

M. de Voltaire had an edition of the *Henriad* printed at London in 1726. There was then at London a Greek, a native of Smyrna, named Dadiki, interpreter of the king of England. He saw, by accident, the first leaf of the poem where this verse was :

Who, happy to become, the French compell'd:

He went to find the author, and said to him : " Sir—I am from the country of Homer ; he did not commence his poems by a stroke of wit, by an enigma." The author believed him, and corrected his commencement in the manner in which it at present appears.

For the rest, the edition of 1723 was made by the Abbe Desfontaines from an unfinished manuscript which he had embezzled ; and the same Desfontaines published another at Evreux, which is extremely rare, and in which he inserted some verses of his own fashioning.

(b) Edition of 1723.

In Paris troubling all, from her high tow'rs,
From Rome, from Spain assistance calling in ;
On th' other side the props of France appear,

In sect divided, but in vengeance one:
 Henry of their designs was soul and stay;
 Him following their impatient hearts pursued.
 One would have said the army, by him rul'd,
 Had but one church, and but one chief obey'd.
 Such was thy will, great God, whose high designs,
 By secret springs, unknown to mortal man,
 Confounding of the league the haughty hopes,
 Destined thy empire France to Bourbon's hands;
 Already at those ramparts' base, &c.

The verse,

From Rome, from Spain assistance calling in,
 was at first replaced by this one:

Of haughty Spain th' assistance calling in.

At last, in the edition of 1775, M. de Voltaire put:

The willing succours of the Spanish arms.

(c) Editions of 1725, 1740, &c.

They know the laws, the sacred rights of blood,
 Above all virtue call you to my rank.

(d) Dear is the time to us, the winds are fair:

Go! to my views ah let thy zeal respond;

To signalize my blows I wait for you.

He, who would conquer, reign, with you must fight.

He said, the prince, &c.

(e) Edition of 1723:

Now of the Neustrains had he freed the land;

Of all his friends him Sully sole attends;

Sully, who famous both in war and peace,

A soldier brave, a virtuous courtier e'er,

His prudence showing in employments great,

Serv'd equally his country and his lord.

Blest if instructed in the law divine,

He for his God, as for his king, had done!

Between two rocks, &c.

The friendship of M. de Voltaire for M. the Duke de Sully, had engaged him to give Sully as a confidant to Henry IV. in his poem. Nevertheless the part which Sully could have played in the Henriad, which finished with the siege of Paris, was

very inferiour to that which he has since played in history. M. de Voltaire having had some very just and weighty reasons to complain of the Duke de Sully, has corrected that fault, has substituted for him the sage Mornay; and not being able to render him interesting, in making him act, has given him that original and sublime character, which he could not impute to Sully, or to any other friend of Henry IV., without deviating, too much from history.

(f) Anchor is weigh'd, they start, fly far from land;
 And soon approach to England's happy fields:
 Henry the shore seeks, and with curious eye,
 Those climates, then by heav'n belov'd, surveys.
 Under their rustic roofs, the labourers calm,
 The treasures of those fertile fields amass,
 And fear not that the savage troops shall spoil,
 Ravage the beauteous plains their hands have till'd.
 Peace, in the midst of them, fulfills their hopes,
 Offsprings of plenty, leads the pleasures on.
 "When shall the French," says Bourbon, "people blest,
 See the laws flourish with so fair a reign?
 For you, O what a pattern, earthly kings!
 A woman here hath shut the gates of war,
 Horror and Discord sending dread to you,
 She makes the happiness of an admiring realm."
 These words concluding, he a grove perceives,
 Amongst whose leaves the light wing'd zephyrs play'd:
 Her brightest colours Flora spread afar;
 There amidst flow'rs a wave transparent flows;
 A grotto is hard by, &c.

(g) There was in the editions which preceded that of 1775:
 He sole is always firm: our malice vain
 May will his holy city to destroy;
 He to the blest foundations strength affords,
 Foundations victors both o'er hell and time.
 Himself great Bourbon will he make thee know.

This tirade appeared to the author rather made for the pulpit than for poetry, and little worthy of that tolerating philosophy which he has always announced. It is necessary moreover to remark that in the *Henriad*, a poem which terminates in the conversion of Henry IV., the poet has always expressed himself as a catholic.

(h) Edition of 1723.

Weeping, he clasps that virtuous old man ;
And from these peaceful seats regretful goes :
Advances, to that famous city comes
Which proud Thames, with its waters washing, laves.

There is the ancient seat of Albion's kings ;
Elizabeth then there her court conven'd.
The earth respects her, heav'n her form'd
A happy peace to yield this isle alarm'd ;
To make, by this unconquer'd valor, her yoke belov'd,
Realm that ne'er yet could serve, nor yet live free.

The prince in secret to the queen is led ;
He sees her, and his errand quick relates,
And his heart bending to a suppliant's prayer,
In his submissions shows his grandeur forth.
"What serve ye Valois," &c.

The beautiful picture of England was added in the editions following, after what M. de Voltaire had seen himself in that island ; and that picture resembles rather England under George I. than England under Elizabeth.

In a poem it is not obligatory to conform rigorously to historic truth, neither as to the order and detail of facts, nor even as to the character of the personages ; it suffices not to wander from history in the great events, and not to shock public opinion in respect to the principal characters. M. de Voltaire could then, without doubt, give nothing here but praises to Elizabeth, and render justice, in his history, to the perfidy, cruelty, and hypocrisy of that princess.

(i) Edition of 1723.

But using only stratagem and guile,
My foe he was through weakness and through fear.
Him have I vanquish'd, him will I avenge ;
Madam, the arm that punish'd shall protect.

In the edition of 1740 there was this :

Queen, I speak here without detour or guile :
You have commanded me to lose restraint ;
And which has never learn'd disguise, my heart,
Ready to serve, shall Valois not excuse

NOTES ON THE SECOND CANTO.

1. There is but this single canto in which the author has made no change ; he has only corrected two verses in the last editions. Instead of

That word escap'd me, I with freedom speak,
he has put :

That word escap'd me, pardon thou the fault.
Instead of

Mark'd her new empire by a hundred fights,
he has put :

Hath her new empire signaliz'd with blood.

2 Some inattentive readers may be alarmed at the *hardihood* of these expressions. It is just to be tender on that scruple of theirs, and to make them consider that the same words, which would have been an impiety in the mouth of catholic, are very becoming in that of a king of Navarre ; he was then a calvinist. Many of our historians, besides, paint him to us as floating between the two religions ; and certainly if he judged the one or the other only by the conduct of the different parties, he must have distrusted the worship of both, which was sustained, at that time, but by crime. He is represented here a man of honor, as he was, seeking in good faith to enlighten himself ; a friend of truth, an enemy of persecution, and detesting crime wherever it was found.

3 Francis, Duke of Guise, commonly called the grand Duke of Guise, was the father of Balafre. (gash.) It was he, who with the cardinal his brother, laid the foundations of the league. He had some great qualities which we must be very careful of confounding with virtuous ones.

The President de Thou, that great historian, reports that Francis de Guise wished to have Anthony de Navarre assassinated.

ated, in the chamber of Francis II. He had engaged that young king to permit this murder. Anthony de Navarre had a bold heart though a feeble spirit. He was informed of the complot and did not stop entering the chamber where he was to be assassinated. "If they slay me," said he to Reinsy, his gentleman, "take my bloody shirt, carry it to my son and to my wife; they will read in my blood what they ought to do to avenge me."

Francis II. dared not, says M. de Thou, sully himself with the crime; and the Duke de Guise, bursting from the chamber cried out: "what a poor king have we!"

4 M. de Castlenau, Envoy of France, to Queen Elizabeth, speaks thus of her:

"That Princess had all the great qualities requisite for reigning happily. It might be said of her reign what happened in the time of Augustus, when the temple of Janus was shut," &c.

5 Catherine de Medicis quarrelled with her son Charles IX. to the end of that prince's life, and afterwards with Henry III. She had been so openly discontented with the government of Francis II., that she has been suspected, though unjustly, of having hastened the death of that king.

6 In the memoirs of the league is found a letter of Catherine de Medicis to the Prince of Conde, by which she thanks him for having taken arms against the court.

7 She was accused of having had an intrigue with the Judge de Chartres, who died in the Bastile, and with a gentleman, a Breton, named Moscuet.

8 When she thought the battle of Dreux lost, and the protestants victors: "ah, well!" said she, "we will pray to God in French."

9 She was weak enough to believe in magic; witness the talismans which were found after her death.

10 The battle of Dreux was the first pitched battle which was fought between the catholic and protestant party. It was in 1562.

11 Anne de Montmorenci, an obstinate and inflexible man, the most unfortunate general of his time, made prisoner at Pavia

and at Dreux, beaten at St. Quentin by Philip II., was at length mortally wounded at the battle of St. Denis, by an Englishman, named Stuart, the same who had taken him at the battle of Dreux.

12 This is the same Francis de Guise, heretofore cited, famous by the defence of Metz against Charles V. He besieged the protestants at Orleans, in 1563, when Poltrot de Mere, an Angoumois gentleman, killed him behind with the shot of a pistol, charged with poisoned balls. He died, at the age of forty-four covered with glory, and regretted by the catholics.

13 Anthony de Bourbon, king of Navarre, father of the most intrepid and firmest of men, was the most feeble and least decided: he was a huguenot and his wife a catholic. They both of them changed their religion, nearly at the same time. Jane D'Albret was afterwards a bigotted huguenot, but Anthony was ever wavering in his catholic faith, so that it is even doubted in which religion he died. He bore arms against the protestants whom he loved, and served Catherine de Medicis, whom he detested, and the party of the Guises, who oppressed him.

He had some idea of the regency, after the death of Francis II. The queen-mother sent for him: "I know," said she, "you pretend to the government; it is my will that you yield it up to me instantly, by a writing under your hand, and that you engage to remit the regency to me, if the states should offer it to you." Anthony de Bourbon gave the writing which the queen demanded of him, and signed thus his own dishonour. It was on this occasion that those verses were made, which I have read in the manuscripts of M. the First President de Mesmes:

Marc-Anthony, who might have claim'd
To be his country's master nam'd
And lord, so far forgot
Himself, as with content to be
But a queen's toy and Anthony:
The Navarrese's lot.

After the famous conspiracy of Amboise, an infinite number of gentlemen came to offer their services and their lives to Anthony de Navarre: he put himself at their head; but he soon dismissed them, promising to demand their pardon. "Think only of obtaining it for yourself," answered an old captain to him, "ours is at the end of our swords."

He died at forty-four, the same age as the Duke de Guise, of a shot from an arquebuse, received in his left shoulder, at the siege of Rouen, where he commanded. His death happened the 17th of November, 1562, the thirty-fifth day of his wound.

The uncertainty which he had shown during his life, troubled him in his last moments ; and though he had received the sacraments according to the usage of the Romish church, it was doubted whether he did not die a protestant. He had received his mortal blow in the trench, where he had privately retired. So this epitaph was made on him :

Ami Francais, le prince ici gisaut
Vecut sans gloire, et morut en pisaut.

There is one with M. le Laboureur, which resembles this and ends with the same hemistich. M. Jurieu asserts that when Louis, Prince de Conde, was in prison, at Orleans, the king of Navarre, his brother, went to solicit the Cardinal Lorraine, and that he received the king of Navarre, sitting and covered, who addressed him standing and bare-headed. I know not whence M. de Jurieu could discover this fact. (Taken from the edition of 1723.)

14 Louis de Conde, brother of Anthony, king of Navarre, the seventh and last of the children of Charles de Bourbon, Duke de Vendôme, was one of those extraordinary men born for misfortune and for the glory of their country. He was for a long time the chief of the reformers, and died, as is known, at Jarnac. He had one arm in a sling on the day of battle. As he was marching towards the enemy, the horse of the Count de Rochefoucauld, his brother-in-law, gave him a kick which bruised his thigh. The prince, without deigning to complain, addressed himself to the gentlemen who accompanied him : "Learn," says he to them, "that unruly horses do more harm than good in an army." An instant after, he said to them, "the Prince of Conde does not fear to give battle since you follow him ;" and charged at the moment. Brantôme says that after the prince had surrendered himself a prisoner to Dargence, in that battle, a very reputable and brave gentleman, named Montesquiou, who having demanded who he was, being told that it was M. the Prince de Conde ; says, "kill him, kill him," and shot him in the head with a pistol. Montesquiou was a captain in the guards of the Duke d'Anjou, afterwards Henry III. The Count de Soissons, youngest son of the Prince de

Conde, searched throughout for Montesquiou and his relations to sacrifice them to his vengeance.

Henry IV. was at the battle of Jarnac, though he was but fourteen, and remarked the faults which caused the loss of the battle.

The Prince de Conde was hunch-backed and small, and at the same time full of agreeableness, witty, gallant, and beloved by the women. On him was made this vaudeville :

That little man so blithe and free,
Who laughs and chats so full of glee,
And smacks his lass whene'er he can ;
God guard from harm that little man.

Madame the Marshall de St. Andre ruined herself for him, and gave him, amongst other presents, the domain of Vallery, which afterwards became the burying place of the princes of the house of Conde.

Never was there a general more beloved by his soldiers : An astonishing example of it was seen at Pont-au-Mousson. He was in want of money to pay his troops, and especially those German troops who had come to his assistance and who had threatened to abandon him : he dared to propose to his own troops, whom he did not pay, that it should pay the auxiliary army : and what could never happen but in a war of religion, and under a general like himself, his whole army clubbed together to pay it, even to the least soldier-boy.

He was condemned, under Francis II., at Orleans, to lose his head ; but it is not known whether the decree was signed. France was astonished to see a peer, a prince of the blood, who could not be judged but by the court of peers, the assembled chambers, obliged to answer before commissioners ; but what appeared most strange was that the commissioners themselves were drawn from the body of the parliament. They were Christopher de Thou, since first president, the father of the historian ; Barthelemi Faye, James Viole, counsellors ; Bourdin, attorney-general ; and du Thillet, the register, who all, in accepting this commission, derogated from their privileges, and thereby deprived themselves of the liberty of reclaiming their rights, if ever it should have been wished, on any occasion, to give to themselves other judges than their natural ones. It is pretended that Madame Rence de France, daughter of Louis XII. and Duchess of Ferrara, who arrived in France about that time, contributed not a little to hinder the execution of that decree.

We must not omit an artifice of the court of which it made use to destroy that prince, whose name was Louis. His enemies had a medal struck representing him : for its legend it had Louis XIII., king of France. This medal was thrown into the hands of the Constable Montmorenci, who, in a rage, showed it to the king, persuaded that the Prince de Conde had had it struck. This medal is mentioned in Brantôme and in Vigneul de Marville.

15 Gaspard de Coligny, admiral of France, &c., after the death of Prince de Conde, was declared chief of the reformed party in France. Catherine de Medicis and Charles IX. resolved to draw him to court for the marriage of Henry IV. and of Margaret de Valois, the sister of Charles IX. and of Henry III. He was massacred on Saint Barthelemy's day : it was principally for that great man for whom it was determined upon.

Some persons have reproached the author of the *Henriad* for having made his hero, in this second canto, a huguenot revolted against his king, and accused by the public voice of the assassination of Francis de Guise. That laudable criticism is founded on the obedience to a sovereign, which should form the principal characteristic of a French hero : but it must be considered that it is Henry IV. who here speaks. He had made his first campaigns under the admiral, who held for him the place of a father : he had been accustomed to respect him, and ought not, and could not suspect him guilty of any action unworthy of a great man, especially after the public justification of Coligny, which could not have appeared doubtful to the king of Navarre.

In regard to his revolt, it was not for that prince to regard as a crime, in the admiral, his union with the house of Bourbon against the Lorraines and an Italian. As to religion, they were both protestants ; and the huguenots, of whom Henry IV. was the chief, regarded the admiral as a martyr.

16 It has been pretended that the project of the massacre of the huguenots had been formed eight years before ; that the Duke d'Alva had given the counsel to Catherine de Medicis, in the conferences he had with her at Bordeaux.

Others think that the project was not formed until the time of the last peace with the huguenots. M. de Voltaire was of that opinion ; otherwise he would not have said :

In secret shades, but lately taught, her son
Had Medicis form'd for perjury and deceit.

Some writers have even advanced that Charles IX. knew nothing still of the project when the admiral was slain; that he was in earnest when he swore to punish the assassins of the admiral; that the queen then avowed to him that she was one of the accomplices; persuaded him, in an instant, to commit the same crime with them upon whom he had just been swearing to execute vengeance, and to cause a hundred thousand of his subjects to be butchered whom he had been pardoning.

Others, in fine, have thought that the design of the queen to have the admiral slain at the expense of the Duke de Guise, to cause the duke and his satellites to be attacked afterwards; that then Charles IX., delivered at once of the two party chiefs whom he had reason to fear, would have, in the eyes of all Europe, the honour of having punished the crime of the Duke de Guise. The ability of Balafre (gash) made a failure in this project.

We will not here discuss all those opinions, the three first of which are supported by probabilities sufficiently strong.—What appears certain is, that there was shown in the execution of the project as much irresolution as atrocity; that the chiefs did not agree amongst themselves upon any thing; that the Duke de Guise wished to envelope in the massacre all the great families that were faithful to the king; that he multiplied victims; that when Charles IX. came to the parliament to accuse the admiral, with so much baseness, of a pretended conspiracy, he was ready, (and perhaps already had done so,) to send counter orders into the provinces; that the orders did not all emanate from him; that, in fine, popular fanaticism, the barbarity of Charles IX., of the Duke d'Anjou, and his mother, were on that occasion only the instruments of projects of which themselves were to become the victims.

17 Margaret de Valois, sister of Charles IX., was married to Henry IV. in 1572, a few days before the massacres.

18 The Pope refused Margaret de Valois permission to espouse Henry IV. "If Monsieur, the Pope plays the beast too much," said Charles IX. with his customary oaths, "I will take Margaret myself by the hand, and will lead her to be married in full protestant assembly." At last the Pope yielded, and Margaret was married at the door of Notre Dame de Paris, by the

Cardinal de Bourbon, uncle of Henry IV. Did Charles IX. speak in earnest? Or was that apparent wrath against the Pope, the fruit of dissimulation? Was the Pope, who afterwards approved of this St. Barthelemi, acquainted with the plot when he granted a dispensation?

19 Jane d'Albret, attracted to Paris with the other huguenots, died five days after of a malignant fever: the time of her death, the massacres that followed, the fear her courage would have given the court; in fine, her malady which commenced after having purchased gloves and perfumed neck collars, at the shop of a perfumer, named René, come from Florence with the queen, and who passed for a public poisoner; all this would induce a belief that she died of poison. It is said, besides, that René boasted of his crime, and dared to say that he had prepared as much for two great lords who did not distrust him. Mezerai, in his great history appears to favour this opinion, in saying that the surgeons who opened the body of the queen, did not touch her head at all, where it was suspected the poison had left traces too visible. We have not wished to put these suspicions into the mouth of Henry IV., because it is just to distrust those ideas which never attribute the death of the great to natural causes. The people without fathoming any thing, always regard those as guilty of the death of a prince to whom that death is useful. They pushed this freedom of suspicion so far as to accuse Catherine de Medicis of the death of her own children; yet it had never been proved either that the princes or that Jane d'Albret, the subject of these remarks, had died of poison. It is not true, as Mezerai pretends, that they did not open the brains of the queen of Navarre; she had expressly recommended that they should examine that part with exactness after her death. She had been tormented, all her life, with great pains in the head, accompanied with itchings, and ordered that they should carefully search for the cause of that disorder, to the end that they might cure it in her children, if they should be attacked with it.

The Chronologie Novenaire reports formally, that Caillard, her physician, and Desnocuds, her surgeon, dissected her brain which they found very sound; that they perceived only some watery pimples, lodged between the scull and the pellicle that envelopes the brain, which they judged to be the cause of the head-aches of which the queen had complained: they attested moreover that she had died of an abscess formed in the breast.

It is to be remarked that they who opened her were huguenots, and probably they would have spoken of poison had they found any appearance of it. I may be answered that they were bribed by the court: but Desnocuds, surgeon of Jane d'Albret, a flaming huguenot, afterwards wrote libels against the court, which he would not have done had he sold himself to it; and in his libels he has not asserted that Jane d'Albret was poisoned. Besides, it is not credible that a woman of the ability of Catherine de Medicis should have charged a miserable perfumer with such a commission, who had, it is said, the insolence to boast of it.

Jane d'Albret was born in 1539, of Henry d'Albret, king of Navarre, and of Margaret de Valois, sister of Francis I. At the age of twelve, Jane was married to William, Duke of Cleves; She never lived with her husband. The marriage was declared null two years afterwards, by the Pope Paul III., and she espoused Anthony de Bourbon. This second marriage, contracted during the life of the first husband, gave room afterwards for the preachers of the league to say publicly, in their sermons against Henry IV., that he was a bastard: but what was stranger still is that the Guises, and amongst others Francis de Guise, who is said to have been so good a christian, should have abused the weakness of Anthony de Bourbon so far as to persuade him to repudiate his wife, by whom he had children, to espouse their neice and give himself up to them. Little was necessary to persuade the king of Navarre to have fallen into that snare. Jane d'Albert died at the age of forty-two, the 9th of June 1572.

M. Bayle, in his answers to the questions of a provincial, says that he had in his time seen, in Holland, the son of a minister, named Goyon, who passed for the grandson of that queen. It was pretended that after the death of Anthony de Navarre, she had married a gentleman named Goyon, of whom she had this minister.

20 It was the night from the 23d to the 24th of August, the feast of Saint-Barthelemi, in 1572, that this bloody tragedy was executed.

The admiral was lodged in the Rue Betizi, at a house which is at present an inn, called the Hotel St. Pierre, where his chamber is still seen.

21 The Count de Teligny had espoused, about ten months before, the admiral's daughter. His appearance was so agreeable

and sweet that the first who had come to slay him were softened at the sight of him. But others, more barbarous, massacred him.

22 Besme was a German, a domestic of the house of Guise. That miserable wretch being afterwards taken by the protestants, the inhabitants of Rochelle wished to purchase him to have him quartered in their public place. They proposed afterwards to exchange him for the brave Montbrun, chief of the protestants of Dauphiny, for whom the parliament of Grenoble were then holding trial. Montbrun was executed, and Besme slain by a person, named Bretanville.

23 It is impossible to ascertain the truth whether Catherine de Medicis sent the head of the admiral or not, as the protestants assert. But it is certain that his head was carried to the queen, with a coffer full of papers, amongst which was a history of the times written by the hands of Coligny. There were found likewise many memoirs on public affairs. One of these memoirs had for its object to engage Charles to make war upon the English. Charles IX. had the memoir read to the English ambassador, who complained to him of the treachery practised on the protestants, and who but the more despised the policy of the court of France. Another memoir showed to the king the dangers to which he would expose the tranquility of the state, should he give an apanage to his brother the Duke d'Alençon. It was shown to that young prince who regretted the admiral. "I don't know," answered he, after having read it, "whether this memorial is written by one of my friends, but it assuredly is by a faithful subject."

The populace dragged the body of the admiral through the streets, and hung it, by the feet, with an iron chain, to the gibbet of Montfaucon. The king had the cruelty to go himself, with his court, to Montfaucon, to enjoy that horrid spectacle. Some one having said to him that the body of the admiral smelt bad, he answered like Vitellius: "The body of a dead enemy always smells well."

He went to the parliament to accuse the admiral of a conspiracy, and the parliament rendered a decree against the dead, by which it ordained that his body after having been dragged on a hurdle, should be suspended on the gallows, his children declared plebeian, and incapable of possessing any employments, his house of Chatillon-sur-Loing razed, his trees cut down, &c.

and that every year there should be a procession on St. Bartholemi's day, to thank God for the discovery of a conspiracy of which the admiral had never dreamed. Notwithstanding that decree, the daughter of the admiral, the widow of Teligny, espoused a little time afterwards the Prince of Orange.

The parliament had some years before put fifty thousand crowns on his head; it is somewhat singular that it should be precisely the same reward which it put afterwards on that of the Cardinal Mazarin. It is the genius of the French to turn the most frightful events into pleasantries; there is owing to them a little writing entitled "*Passio Domini Nostri Gaspardi Coligni secundum Bartholomeum*."

Mezarai reports, in his great history, a fact which we are not permitted to doubt. He says, some years before, the guardian of the convent of holy Cordeliers, named Michael Crellet, condemned by the admiral to be hung, predicted to him that he should die by assassination, that he should be flung through the windows, and afterwards be hung himself.

In our days a financier, having purchased a piece of land which had belonged to Coligny, found there in the park, some some feet below the earth, an iron coffer full of papers, which he had thrown into the fire as not producing any revenue.

24 This was Henry, Duke de Guise, surnamed Balafre, (gash,) famous afterwards for the Barricades, and who was slain at Blois. He was the son of Duke Francis, assassinated by Poltrot.

25 Frederick de Gonzagua, of the house of Mantua, Duke de Nevers, one of the authors of the St. Bartholemi.

26 Albert de Gondi, Marshall de Retz, favourite of Catherine de Medicis. It was he who had learned Charles IX. to swear and curse God, as it was said in those times.

27 Gaspard de Tavanne, raised as a page of Francis I. He ran through the streets on St. Bartholemi's eve, crying: "bleed! bleed! bleeding is as good in the month of August as in the month of May." His son, who has written his memoirs, reports that his father, being on his death bed, made a general confession of his life and the confessor having said to him, with an air of astonishment: "how! you tell me nothing of the St. Bartholemi?" "I regard that," replied the Marshall, "as a meritorious action which ought to efface my other sins."

28 Anthony de Clermont-Renel, saving himself in his shirt, was massacred by the son of the Baron des Adrets, and by his own cousin Bussy d'Amboise. The Marquis de Pardaillan was slain at his side.

29 Guerchy defended himself a long time, in the streets, and slew some of the murderers before he was overpowered by numbers; but the Marquis de Lavardin had not time to draw his sword.

30 Marsillac, Count de la Rochefoucauld, was a favourite of Charles IX., and had passed a part of the night with the king. That prince had felt a desire to save him, and had moreover told him to sleep at the Louvre: but at last he suffered him to depart, saying: "I see well that God wills that he should perish."

Soubise bore that name because he had married the heiress of the house of Soubise. His name was Dupont-Quellenec. He defended himself, a long time, and fell pierced with wounds under the windows of the queen. As his wife had instituted a suit against him for impotency, the dames of the court went to view his naked and bloody body through a barbarous curiosity worthy of that abominable court.

31 See what Brantôme himself makes no difficulty of avowing in his memoirs: "When it was day, the king put his head to the window of his chamber, and observing some in the Fauxbourg Saint Germain, who were removing and saving themselves, he took a large fowling-piece he had and fired many shots at them, but in vain, for the piece did not carry so far: continually crying out: "slay them, slay them." Many persons have heard the Marshall de Tessé relate that in his youth, he had seen a gentleman of more than a hundred years of age, who had been, while very young, in the guards of Charles IX. He questioned that old man respecting the St. Barthelemi, and asked him if it were true that the king had fired upon the huguenots: "It was myself, sir," answered the old man, "who loaded his fowling-piece." Henry IV. said publicly, more than once, that after the St. Barthelemi, a cloud of ravens came to perch themselves upon the Louvre, and that for seven nights the king, himself, and all the court, heard groans and dreadful cries at the same hour. He at the same time recounted a prodigy stranger still. He said that, some days before the massa-

18

The following information was obtained from the records of the [redacted] Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, regarding the [redacted] land grant.

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cres, playing at dice with the Duke d'Alençon and the Duke de Guise, he saw drops of blood upon the table ; that twice he attempted to dry them up, that they twice re-appeared and that he left the play, seized with dread.

32 There is found, in the memoirs of Villeroi, a discourse of Henry III., to one of his confidants, concerning the St. Barthelemi, in which that prince frees Charles IX. from blame, and accuses his mother and himself. Charles IX., according to that recital, was led away by the solicitations of his mother and brother, who avowed to him that the assassination of Coligny had been committed by their order, and that it was necessary for them to immolate the admiral, or to ordain the massacre of the protestants, for which they had taken measures in advance. M. de Voltaire could not admit this recital without rendering Valois too odious ; besides this piece is any thing but authentic.

33 Caumont, who escaped the St. Barthelemi, is the famous Marshal de la Force, who since obtained so great a reputation and who lived to the age of eighty-four. He left memoirs which have never been printed, and which must still be in the family of La Force.

Mezerai, in his great history, says, that this young Caumont, his father, and his brother, were sleeping together on the same bed ; that his father and brother were massacred, and that he escaped as by a miracle, &c. It is upon the credit of this historian that I have put this adventure in verse. The circumstances by which Mezerai supports his recital did not permit me to doubt the truth of the fact as it is reported by him : but since that time, M. the Duke de la Force has shown me the manuscript memoirs of that same Marshall de la Force, written by his own hand. The Marshall there relates his adventures in another way : which evidences how necessary it is to distrust historians.

Here is an extract of the curious particulars which the Marshall de la Force recounts of the St. Barthelemi.

"Two days before the St. Barthelemi, the king had ordered the parliament to release an officer, a prisoner in the Conciergerie ; the parliament having done nothing, the king sent some of his guards to break the prison gates and take the prisoner out by force. On the morrow the parliament came to make remonstrances to the king : those gentlemen, all, had put scarfs

On their arms, to show Charles IX. that he had lamed justice. All this made a good deal of noise ; and at the beginning of the massacre, the huguenots were at first persuaded that the tumult which they heard arose from a sedition, excited amongst the people, on account of the affair of the parliament. In the meantime, a jockey, who had seen the Duke de Guise with his satellites enter the house of the Admiral de Coligny, and who, slipping amongst the crowd, had been a witness of the assassination of that nobleman, ran, straightway to give information to the Lord de Caumont de la Force, to whom he had sold ten horses, eight days before. La Force and his two sons lodged in the Faubourg de St. Germain, as well as many other calvinists. There was as yet no bridge which joined the faubourg to the city. All the boats had been seized upon by order of the court, to transport the assassins into the faubourg. This jockey throws himself in a swimming, passes to the other side, and informs M. de la Force of his danger.

La Force had already sallied from his mansion ; he had besides had sufficient time to save himself : but seeing that his children had not come, he returned to seek for them. Scarcely had he re-entered into his house before the assassins arrive : one named Martin, at their head, enters his chamber, disarms both him and his children, and tells him, with frightful oaths that they must die.

La Force proposed to him a ransom of two thousand crowns ! the captain accepts it ; La Force swears to pay it to him in two days ; and immediately the assassins, after having entirely plundered the house, tell La Force and his sons to make crosses with their handkerchiefs on their hats, and to tuck up their right sleeves to the shoulder : that was the mark of the murderers. In that state they made them pass the river, and led them into the city. The Marshall de la Force assures us that he saw the river covered with the dead. His father, his brother, and himself, went by the Louvre ; there they saw many of their friends butchered, and, amongst others, the brave De Piles, father of him that slew the son of Malherbe in a duel. Thence this captain Martin led his prisoners to his house in the Rue des Petits-Champs, made La Force swear that neither he nor his sons would go thence before their having first paid him the two thousand crowns, left them in the custody of two Swiss soldiers, and went into the city to seek other calvinists to massacre.

One of the Swiss, touched with compassion, offered the prisoners to save them. La Force would not do any thing; he responded that he had given his word, and that he preferred to die rather than to break it. An aunt that he had, found the two thousand crowns; and they were about to be delivered to the captain Martin, when the Count de Coconas (the same whose head was afterwards taken off) came to tell La Force that the Duke d'Anjou demanded to speak with him. Immediately the father and the sons, bare-headed and without their cloaks, were carried down. La Force saw well that death awaited him; he followed Coconas, praying him to spare his two innocent children. The youngest, thirteen years old, who was named James Nompar, and who writes this, lifted up his voice, and reproached these murderers with their crimes.

Meanwhile the two children with their father are led to the end of the Rue des Petits-Champs; many blows are at first given to the eldest, with the poignard, who cries out: "ah, my father! ah, my God! I am dead." At the same moment the father falls, pierced with blows, upon the body of his son. The youngest, covered with their blood, but who, by an astonishing miracle, had not received a single blow, had the prudence to cry out likewise: "I am dead." He let himself fall between his father and his brother whose last sighs he received. The murderers, thinking them all dead, departed, saying: "There, they are all three well off."

Some wretches came afterwards to strip the bodies: There remained a piece of coarse linen round young La Force; a marker of tennis, of Verdelet, wished to have this piece of coarse linen; drawing it off, he amused himself with considering the body of the young child: "Ah," said he, "'tis a great loss; this was but a child, what could it have done?" These compassionate words made the little La Force raise his head gently, and say to him very low: "I am not yet dead." The poor man answers him: "Don't stir from hence, my child, —have patience." At night he came to seek for him; he says to him: "Rise now, they are no longer here;" and cast over his shoulders an old cloak. As he was conducting him along, some one of the executioners demanded of him: "What young lad is that?" "It is my nephew," said he to him, "who is intoxicated; you see how he's drest; I am going to give him a good whipping." In fine, the poor marker led him home to his own house, and demanded thirty crowns of him for his recompense.

From thence the young La Force had himself conducted, disguised as a beggar, as far as the arsenal, to the house of the Marshall de Biron, his relation, grand master of artillery. He was concealed for some time in the chamber of the young women; at length, on a report that the court was causing a search to be made for him, to put him to death, he was saved, in the habit of a page under the name of Beaupuy."

34 Many gentlemen, attached to Henry IV., were assassinated in his apartment: they were pursued even to the chamber of the queen, his wife, sister of Charles IX., who saved them by casting herself between them and the murderers. Henry IV. and the Prince de Conde, his cousin, were arrested; they were threatened with death and forced to abjure calvinism. The priests supported themselves afterwards by that abjuration to treat him as one of the relapsed. Some historians have reported that Charles IX. and his mother went to the Hotel de Ville to be witnesses of the execution of Briquemant and of Cavagne, condemned to death as accomplices of the pretended conspiracy which they had the baseness to impute to the Admiral de Coligny, and that Henry IV. and the Prince de Conde were obliged to follow and accompany the king.

35 Couriers were at first sent to the commandants of provinces, and to the chiefs of the principal cities, to order the massacre. Some time afterwards a counter-order was sent; in some cities it was executed notwithstanding the counter-order, at Lyons, amongst others, where the party of the Guises prevailed: but in a great number the catholic chiefs opposed the execution of these orders: the Count de Tende, in Provence; Gordes, of the house of Simiane, in Dauphiny; St Herem, in Auvergne; Charni, of the house of Chabot, in Burgundy; La Guiche, at Macon; the brave d'Ortez, at Bayonne; Villars, consul of Nismes; the bishops of Angers, of Lisieux, &c. &c.

Many of the protestants, were saved by their relations, by their friends, some even by the priests; of this number was one Troughin, who stayed many days concealed at Troyes in a cask, and having retired to Geneva, he there became the stock of the family of that name.

NOTES ON THE THIRD CANTO.

1 Charles IX. was always unwell after the St. Barthelemi, and died about two years afterwards, the 30th of May, 1574, all bathed in his own blood which came through the pores.— Henry IV. was a witness of the death of Charles IX. That prince, from whom he had received so many outrages, had him called, a few hours before his death : he recommended to him his wife and his daughter, as to the natural heir of the crown, and to a prince whose greatness of soul and good faith he knew. He then advertised him to distrust —— (but he pronounced that name, and some words which followed, in such a manner as not to be understood by those who were in the chamber.) “ Monsieur, must not say that,” said the queen-mother, who was present. “ Why not say it ?” replied Charles IX. ; “ it is true.” It is probable that it was of Henry III. of whom he spake : he knew all his vices, and he had viewed him with horror, since he had seen him retard his departure for Poland, in the hope of his approaching end.

2 The reputation he had acquired at Jarnac and at Montcontour, sustained by the silver of France, had caused him to be elected king of Poland in 1573. He succeeded Sigismund II. the last prince of the race of the Jagellons.

3 Henry de Guise, (Balafre,) born in 1550, of Francis de Guise and Anne d'Est. He executed the great project of the league, formed by the Cardinal de Lorraine, his uncle, in the time of the council of Trent, and commenced by Francis his father.

4 The author has been chidden for having put the word conventicle (*prêche*) in an epic poem. He replied, that every thing may enter there, and that the epithet of criminal relieves the expression conventicle.

5 Anne, Duke de Joyeuse, fought the battle of Coutras, against Henry IV., then king of Navarre, the 20th of October,

1587. His army has been compared to that of Darius, and that of Henry IV. to Alexander's. Joyeuse was slain in the battle by two captains of infantry, named Bordeaux and Descentiers.

6 He had espoused the sister of the wife of Henry III. In his embassy to Rome, he was treated as the brother of the king. He had a heart worthy of his great fortune. One day having made two secretaries of state wait too long in the antichamber of the king, he made them his excuses, abandoning a gift of a hundred thousand crowns which the king was about conferring upon him.

7 At the same time that the army of the king was beaten at Coutras, the Duke de Guise performed the actions of an able general against a numerous army of German troops which had come to the succour of Henry IV.; and, after having harassed and fatigued them a long time, defeated them at the village Auneau.

8 The Duke of Guise, at the battle of the Barricades, contented himself with sending back to Henry III. his guards, after having disarmed them.

9 The Cardinal de Guise, one of the brothers, of the Duke of Guise, had said, more than once, that he should never die contented until he should have held the head of the king between his knees, to make him a monk's crown. All the world knew the device of Henry III. It was three crowns, with these words: "Manet ultima coelo;" to which the leaguers substituted these: "Manet ultima claustrum." These two Latin verses which had been affixed to the gates of the Louvre, are also well known:

"Qui dedit ante duas, unam abstulit, altera nutat;
Tertia tonsoris est facienda manu."

Here is a translation which the author has read in the manuscripts of the deceased M. le President de Mesmes:

"Valois, the dames who lov'd not,
Was of two crowns posses'd:
But, by a care extreme, forthwith
Of them but one was left.
The second also's like to fall
Thanks to his precious cares:

A third will owe deliverance to
A gaping pair of shears."

10 The Duke de Guise was killed Friday 23d Dec. 1588, at 8 o'clock in the morning. Historians say that a weakness came over him, in the anti-chamber of the king, for he had passed the night with a female of the court : it was Madame Noirmontier, according to tradition. All, who have written the relation of that death, say that the prince, after he had entered the council chamber, began to suspect his misfortune by the movements he perceived. D'Aubigny reports that he first met in the chamber Despinac, archbishop of Lyons, his confidant.—He, who at the time distrusted something, said to him, in the presence of Larchant, captain of the guards, very apropos of a new habit which the duke wore : "That habit is very thin for the present weather ; you should put on a thicker one." These words being pronounced with an air of fear, confirmed those of the duke. He entered meanwhile, by a little passage the chamber of the king, which passage conducted to a cabinet, the door of which had been condemned. The duke, ignorant that the door was closed up, raised the tapestry that covered it, to enter : at the moment many of those Gascons, who were called the forty-five, pierced him with poigniards which the king himself had distributed to them.

The assassins were La Bastide, Monsivry, St. Malin, St. Gaudin, St. Capautel, Halfrenas, Herbelade, with Lognac, their captain. It was Monsivry who gave the first blow : he was followed by Lognac, by La Bastide, by St. Malin, &c., who cast themselves together on the duke.

There is yet shown in the Chateau de Blois, a stone of the wall against which he supported himself in falling, and which was first tinged with his blood. Some Lorraine, in passing by Blois, have kissed that stone, and, scraping it with a knife, have carefully carried away the dust.

The death of the Cardinal de Guise is not mentioned in the poem, (who was also slain at Blois ;) it is easy to see the reason ; it is because the details of history are not suitable to the unity of a poem, since the interest diminishes according as it is divided.

11 The duke of Mayenne, the younger brother of Balafre, (gash,) slain at Blois, had been a long time jealous of the reputation of his elder brother. He had all the great qualities of his brother, to activity nearly.

12 We read, in the great history of Mezerai, that the duke de Mayenne was suspected of having written a letter to the king, in which he warned him to distrust his brother. This single suspicion authorizes the character given here to the Duke de Mayenne, a character natural to an ambitious man, and especially to the chief of a party.

13 The Chevalier d'Aumale, brother of the Duke d'Aumale, of the house of Lorraine, an impetuous young man, who had some brilliant qualities, who was always at the head of the sorties, during the siege of Paris, and inspired the inhabitants with his own valour and confidence.

14 Philip II., king of Spain, son of Charles V. He was called the demon of the south, *DÆMONIUM MERIDIANUM*, because he troubled all Europe, in the south of which Spain is situated. He sent powerful succours to the league, with a design of throwing the crown of France to the Infanta Clara Eugenia, or some prince of his family.

15 The court of Rome, gained by the Guises, and submissive, at that time, to Spain, did what it could do to ruin France. Gregory XIII. assisted the league with men and money, and Sextus V. commenced his pontificate by the greatest excesses, and happily the most useless, against the royal house, as may be seen in the remarks on the first canto.

16 Henry IV., then king of Navarre, had the generosity to go to Tours to see Henry III., followed by a single page, notwithstanding the distrusts and prayers of his old officers, who feared for him a second St. Barthelemi.

17 Robert d'Evereux, Count Essex, famous for the taking of Cadiz from the Spaniards; for the tenderness of Elizabeth for him, and his tragic death which happened in 1601. He had taken Cadiz from the Spaniards, and beaten them more than once on the sea. Queen Elizabeth really sent him to France, in 1590, to the assistance of Henry IV., at the head of five thousand men.

18 Sextus V., born at the grottoes, in the Marche d'Ancona, of a poor vine-dresser, named Paretti, a man whose turbulence equalled his dissimulation. Whilst a cordelier, he knocked

down the nephew of his provincial, and embroiled himself with the whole order. Inquisitor at Venice, he made disturbances, and was obliged to fly. Whilst cardinal, he composed the bull of excommunication, in Latin, launched by Pope Pius V., against Queen Elizabeth; meanwhile he esteemed that queen, and called her *un grand cervello di principesse*.

19 That event was very recent; for Henry IV. is supposed to have secretly seen Elizabeth, in 1589: and it was the year preceding that the great fleet of Philip II., destined for the conquest of England, was beaten by Admiral Drake, and dispersed by the tempest.

There has been made, in the *Journal of Trevoux*, a specious criticism upon this place. It was not for Queen Elizabeth to think Rome complaisant to the great, since Rome had dared to excommunicate her father.

But the critic did not recollect that the pope had excommunicated the king of England, Henry VIII., only because he was more afraid of Charles. That is not the only fault which the extract of *Trevoux* contains, whose author, disavowed and condemned by the greater part of his brethren, has thrown into his censures more abuse than reason.

VARIATIONS OF THE THIRD CANTO.

(a) There is in the ancient editions :

The lord of fights, propitious to my arms,
That day, the justice of my cause upheld.
Joyeuse I fought; I conquer'd; and my arm
Forc'd him to bite the dust in Coutras' plains;
And my brave noblesse, e'er to conquest us'd,
Scatter'd before me that innum'rous host.

(b) In the first editions :

By a too great success, so oft deplor'd!
Still is my arm with Frenchmen's blood distained.

(c) There was found, in the edition of 1723, these four verses, which the author has retrenched because they render the Duke de Mayenne too trifling :

But by a name so glorious, Paris, fill'd,
Its eyes delay'd not on a chief less known;
And that same whining chief the people laud,
Had still been nothing had but Guise surviv'd.
He to his glory, &c.

(d) In the edition of 1723 we read :

But oft himself he, by his care, deceived;
By too much foresight, oft, irresolute,
More skill'd than active; and his slowness oft
Deprives his party of his valour's worth.

(e) In the edition of 1723 there is :

Lo! such Mayenne, and such his potency.
Meantime the enemy of France's pow'r,
The enemy of Europe, yours and mine,
That king, whose art'fice is his greatest stay,
Philip, the quarrel joining with delight
Of the revolted, props the crim'nal cause;
And Rome that ought, &c.

NOTES ON THE FOURTH CANTO.

1 Henry, Count de Bouchage, younger brother of the Duke de Joyeuse, slain at Coutras.

One day, when he was passing, at Paris, about four o'clock in the morning, near the Capuchin convent, after having passed the night in a debauch, he imagined that angels were chanting the matins in the convent. Struck with that idea, he became a capuchin, under the name of brother Angel. Afterwards he quitted the gown, and took arms against Henry IV. The Duke de Mayenne made him governor of Langusdoc, duke and peer, and Marshall of France. At last he made his accommodation with the king; but one day that prince being with him, upon a balcony, below which many people were assembled: "Cousin," said Henry IV. to him, "these people appear to me very contented at seeing an apostate and a renegade together." That word of the king's caused Joyeuse to re-enter into his convent, where he died.

2 See the History of the Popes.

3 Sextus V., whilst Cardinal de Montalti, counterfeited imbecility so well, nearly fifteen years, that he was commonly called the ass of Acona. It is known by what artifice he obtained the papacy, and with what hauteur he reigned.

4. In 1570 the parliament issued a famous arrêt against the bull in cornu domini.

Its celebrated remonstrances under Louis XI., on the subject of the pragmatic sanction are well known: those which Henry III. made against the scandalous bulle of Sextus V., which styled the reigning house a bastard generation, &c., and his constant firmness in sustaining our liberties against the pretensions of the court of Rome.

5 This verse has often been applied to the author of the *Henriad*, and M. Wirthner had put it for a legend to a medal

which he had struck. This medal is very rare because M. Wirchter, at Geneva, was obliged to suppress his legend.

6 The 17th of January, of the year 1589, the faculty of theology of Paris gave that famous decree by which it was declared that the subjects were absolved from their oaths of fidelity, and could legitimately make war on the king. Le Fevre, the Dean, and some others of the wisest refused to sign. Afterwards, when the sorbonne was free, they revoked that decree, which the tyranny of the league had drawn from some of their body. All the religious orders, who, as well as the Sorbonne, had declared themselves against the royal house, retracted, afterwards, like it. But, if the house of Lorraine had had the supremacy, would it have been retracted?

7 We have thought it our duty to print here the decree of the sorbonne, which is only to be found in books which are no longer read.

Decree of the Faculty of Paris against Henry III.

Responsum facultatis theoloicæ Parisiensis.

Anno Domini millesimo quingentesimo octogesimo nono, die septimâ mensis Januarii, sacratissima theologiæ facultas Parisiensis congregata fuit apud collegium Sorbonæ, post publicam supplicationem omnium ordinum dictæ facultatis, et missam de Sancto Spiritu ibidem celebratum, postulantibus clarissimis D D. prefecto, fidelibus consulibus, et catholicis civibus, oblato publico instrumento, et tabellis per eorundem actuarium obsignatis et publico urbis sigillo munitis, deliberatum super duobus sequentibus articulis qui deprompti sunt ex libello supplicæ prædictorum civium, cujus tenor est hujus modi.

Response of the Faculty of Theology of Paris.

In the year of our Lord 1589, 7th of January, at the request of the governors, officers of the city, and of the catholic inhabitants, who have presented a public act, signed by their register, and sealed with the public seal of the city, the most holy the faculty of theology of Paris, after a solenn public supplication of all the orders of the said faculty, and the celebration of the mass of the Holy Ghost, assembled to deliberate upon the two following articles, which are extracted from the petition of the aforesaid inhabitants whose tenor is as follows, viz :

To his lordship the Duke d'Aumale, governor, and to Messieurs the provost of merchants and sheriffs of the city of Paris :

Humbly shew the good citizens, living and dwelling in the city of Paris: that many of the aforesaid inhabitants and others of this kingdom are in pain and scruple of conscience, to take resolve amidst the preparations which are making for the preservation of the catholic, apostolic and Roman religion of this city of Paris, and of the whole estate of this realm, at the happening of the designs cruelly executed at Blois, and the infraction of the public faith, to the prejudice of the aforesaid religion and of the edict of union and of the natural liberty of the convocation of the states: upon which the said suppliants would desire to have a holy and true resolve. This considered, may it please you to cause the gentlemen of the faculty of theology to assemble to deliberate on these points, circumstances, and incidents; and whether it be permitted to assemble ourselves, to unite and to contribute against the king; whether we are yet bound by the oaths we have sworn to him, upon that to give their advice and resolve.

Let the present petition be laid before Messieurs, the gentlemen of the faculty of theology, who will be prayed to assemble and to give upon it their resolve. Done the 7th January, 1589: Signed Everard, and sealed with the public seal of the city.

Articuli de quibus deliberatum est a prædie ta facultate.

An populus regni Galliæ sit liberatus et solutus à sacramento fidelitatis et obedientiæ Henrico tertio præstito?

An tutâ conscientiâ possit idem populus armari, uniri, et pecunias colligere, et contribuere ad defensionem et conservationem religionis catholicæ, apostolicæ, et Romanæ, in hoc regno, adversus nefaria concilia et conatus prædicti regis et quorum libet adherentium, et contra fidei publicæ violationem ab eo. Blesis factum, in præjudicium prædictæ religionis catholicæ, et edicti sanctæ unionis, et naturalis libertatis convocationis trium ordinum hujus regni?

Super quibus articulis, auditâ omnium et singulorum magistratorum, qui ad septuaginta convenerant, maturâ, accuratâ, et liberâ deliberatione, et auditis multis et variis rationibus, quæ magnâ ex parte tam ex scripturis sacris, tam canonicis sanctionibus et decretis pontificum in medium dissertissimis verbis productæ sunt; conclusum est à domine decano ejusdem facultatis, nemine refragante, et hoc permodum consilii, ad liberandas conscientias prædicti populi.

Primum, quod populus hujus regni solutus est et liberatus à sacramento fidelitatis et obedientiæ præfacto Henrico regi præstito.

Deindè, quod idem populus licitè et tutâ conscientiâ potest armari, uniri, et pecunias colligere, et contribuere ad defensionem et conservationem religionis catholicæ, apostolicæ, et Romanæ, adversus nefaria consilia et conatus prædicti regis, et quorum libet illi adhærentium, ex quo fidem publicam violavit, in præjudicium prædictæ religionis catholicæ, et edicti sanctæ unionis, et naturalis libertatis convocationis trium ordinum hujus regni.

Quam conclusionem insuper visum est eidem Parisiensi facultati transmittendam esse ad sanctissimum dominum nostrum papam, ut eam sanctæ sedis apostolicæ auctoritate probare et confirmare, et eâdem operâ ecclesiæ Gallicanæ, gravissime laboranti, opem et auxilium præstare dignetur.

Articles upon which deliberation has been held by the aforesaid faculty.

Whether the people of France are absolved from the oath of fidelity given to Henry III ?

Whether the said people can in surety of conscience arm themselves, unite, raise money, and contribute for the defence and preservation of the catholic, apostolic and Roman religion, in this kingdom, against the horrible projects and attempts of the said king and his adherents, and against the infraction of the public faith by him committed at Blois, to the prejudice of the said catholic religion, of the edict of holy union, and of the natural liberty of the convocation of the states.

After having heard on these articles the deliberation, mature, exact, and free, of all the doctors assembled, to the number of seventy, and having heard many different reasons, drawn in great part, as well from the holy scriptures, as from the sacred canons and decrees of the pontiffs; it has been concluded by M. the Dean of the said faculty, without a negative, and that by the form of counsel, to lighten the scruples of the said people :

First, that the people of this realm are absolved from the oath of allegiance taken to king Henry. Secondly, That the said people can, with safe conscience, arm themselves, unite, raise money and contribute for the defence of the catholic, apostolic, and Roman religion, against the horrible projects and attempts of the said king and of his adherents, since he has violated the public faith, to the prejudice of the said catholic religion and of the edict of holy union and of the natural liberty of the convocation of the states.

Moreover, the said faculty of Paris has thought proper to send this conclusion to the pope, that he may deign to approve and

confirm it by the authority of the holy apostolic chair, and by that means succour the Gallican church, which is in the most pressing danger.

8 These verses are an imitation of those of Ithalie.

"Descend ye not from those Levites fam'd,
Who, when to the god of Nile the flying Israel
Render'd, in the desert, a criminal worship.
Of their dearest friends holily homicide,
Consecrated their hands in the blood of the unfaithful;
And by that noble exploit acquir'd you the honour
Of being alone employ'd at the altars of the Lord?"

9 After Henry III. and the king of Navarre appeared in arms before Paris, the greater part of the monks put on the cuirass and stood guard with the citizens. In which time the poem designates the procession of the league, where twelve hundred armed monks made a review in Paris, having William Rose, bishop of Senlis, at their head. That occurrence is placed here, though it did not happen until after the death of Henry III.

10 That is not to say that there were but sixteen private persons amongst the seditious, as the Abbe Le Gendre has signified in his little History of France; but they were styled the sixteen, on account of the sixteen wards of Paris, which they controlled by their intelligencers and their emissaries. They had put, at first, at their head, sixteen of the most factious of their body. The principal were Bussi Le Clerc, governor of the Bastile, formerly a fencing master; La Bruyere private lieutenant; the commissary Louchard; Emmonot and Morin, Attorneys; Odinot, Passard, and especially Senaut, deputy to the register of parliament, a man of considerable talent, who first developed that obscure and dangerous question of the power which a nation may have over its king. I shall by passing remark, say that Senaut was the father of P. Senaut, that eloquent man, who died general of the priests of oratory in France.

11 The sixteen were for a long time independent of the Duke of Mayenne. One of them named Normand said one day in the chamber of the Duke: "Those who have made can very well unmake."

12 Achore'e says in Corneille, speaking of Pompey:

To death he advances
With the same front he states distributed.

13 The 16th January 1589, Bussi Le Clerc, one of the sixteen, who, from a fencer, had become governor of the Bastile, and chief of that faction, entered into the great chamber of parliament with fifty satellites: he presented to parliament a petition, or rather an order, to force that body no longer to recognize the royal house.

On the refusal of that body, he himself carried away to the Bastile all those who were opposed to his party; he there made them dine on bread and water, to oblige them to redeem themselves the sooner from his hands: which is the reason why he has been called the grand penitentiary of parliament.

14 Augustin de Thou, second of the name, uncle of the celebrated historian; he had the charge of president from the famous Pibrac, in 1585.

Molé can be no other than Edward Molé, counsellor to parliament, deceased in 1634.

Scarron was the great grandfather of the famous Scarron, so well known by his poetry, and the sprightliness of his wit.

Bayeul was uncle of the superintendent of finances. Nicholas Potier de Novion de Blancménil, was called Blancménil, on account of his estate of that name, which afterwards fell to the house of Lamoignon, by the marriage of his granddaughter to the president de Lamoignon. Nicholas Potier was not in truth conducted to the Bastile with the other members of parliament, for he had not come that day to the great chamber; but he was afterwards imprisoned at the Louvre, about the time of the death of Brisson. They wished to give him the same treatment as that president. He was accused of having a secret correspondence with Henry IV.: the sixteen held his trial according to form, so as to throw the appearance of justice on their side, and not to disgust the people by precipitate executions, which were regarded as assassinations.

At length, as Blancménil was about to be condemned to be hung, the Duke de Mayenne returned to Paris. That prince had ever retained for Blancménil a veneration which could not be refused to his virtue: he went himself to take him from prison; the prisoner cast himself at his feet, and said to him: "My lord, I owe you my life; but I dare to ask you a still greater

favour, which is to permit me to retire to Henry IV., my lawful king: I will acknowledge you all my life as my benefactor, but I cannot serve you as my master." The Duke de Mayenne touched with his discourse, raised him, embraced him, and sent him to Henry IV. The recital of this adventure, with the interrogatory of Blancménil, are yet amongst the papers of M. the President de Novion to this day.

Bussi-Le-Clerc had been at first a fencing-master and afterwards an attorney. When the fortune, or rather misfortune of the times, had raised him to some credit, he took the surname of Bussi, as though he had been as formidable as Bussi d'Amboise. He had himself also styled Bussi the grand potentate.

15 The Bastile.

16 In 1591, a Friday, 15th November, Barnaby Brisson, a very erudite man, and one that had performed the functions of first president, in the absence of Achilles de Harlay; Claude Larcher, counsellor of requests, and John Tardif, prison counsellor, were hung to the same beam in the little chatelét, by order of the sixteen. It is to be observed that Hamilton, rector of St. Come', a furious leaguer, had gone himself to take Tardif, at his house, having with him some priests who served as archers. (See on these events the work entitled, History of Parliament: the author there speaks as a historian, here he speaks as a poet.)

VARIATIONS OF THE FOURTH CANTO.

(a) There is in the first edition :

Quick like the flash whose splendour cuts the cloud,
Henry to Paris flies, with rapid course,
Rage in his eyes, and death within his hands :
There he arrives, combats, their fate is chang'd ;
He puts d'Aumale to flight, makes Joyeuse fall.
Boufflers, where rush you, too audacious chief!
Seek not the death advancing in your eyes ;
Respect of Henry th' unconq'erable worth.
But he beneath that hand already falls ;
Drown'd are his beauteous eyes in shades of death,
And his blood, covering, blots out all his charms :
Such some soft flow'r the morn has seen disclos'd
By Zephyr's kisses and Aurora's tears,
Falls by the primal rage of storm and winds,
Whose foe-like breath comes ravaging our fields.

In vain Mayenne arrests, upon these banks,
Of his scar'd soldiery the flying troops ;
In vain his voice invokes them to the fight ;
Great Henry's voice precipitates their steps ;
And his front's threat'ning terror turns them back ;
Fury unites them, but their fears disperse :
And Mayenne, with them in their flight borne off,
To Paris follows soon the fear-struck herd.

(b) Irresolute all they will not to defend, &c.

After this verse the edition of 1723, puts the four following:

Where are those warriors bold, proud props of law,
Those terrible leaguers who make kings to quake?
Cowardly helpers Paris only holds,
Whom thought of punishment turns pale for fear,
———— So feeble is the common herd, &c.

(c) Instead of these verses there was in the edition of 1723:

'Tis thence the God, who for mankind was born,
Shows, by the high-priests' voice, to realms, his laws:
His first disciples, there conducting, led
Candour and Truth and fair Simplicity;
But th' apostolic traces Rome hath lost.
Policy then in the Vatican held rule, &c.

(d) There was in the London editions:

Its crimes the court conceal'd by fair extern:
There reign'd propriety, the conclave there;
And there, sometimes, the purest virtue reign'd:
Temples the Ursins merited in our times:
But of such sovereigns patterns have been few;
And for a thousand years the church has claim'd
Few spotless pastors, tyrants, many a one.

But as the piety of that pope of the Ursins was accompanied with little prudence, the author has retrenched that eulogy with propriety in a poem which breathes only the truth.

(e) In the edition of 1740, and in the preceding, was read:

Him e'er authority affords prompt aid.
In his discourse sly Falsehood reigns throughout;
And, better to conceal his guile extreme,
She prints it with the voice of Truth itself.

(f) In the first editions was read:

These monsters quick the asylum invest
Whither religion, solitary, calm,
Without eclat, or pomp, in beauty deck'd,
Pass'd on, in prayer and in humility,
Days which she steals from the importunate crowd,
Who to court Fortune to her altars run.

The last editions are far superior.

(g) The first editions have:

Quick Policy and Discord impious
In secret seize upon their foe august;
Upon her modest front, her charms divine,
Their sacrilegious hands they fearless lay,
Her vestments seize, and of the damage proud,

They, with her sacred veil, their heads adorn :
 'Tis done, already their malignant rage
 Through Paris lost goes changing every heart.
 With air bewitching, Policy adroit
 Seeks the vast bosom of the old sorbonne :
 There sees those doctors meet, in mighty throng,
 Defenders wise of verity august.

And in one of the London editions, instead of the last verse,
 Defenders obstinate of their dogmas false.

(h) There is in the first editions :

Of that obedience they the cords disjoin
 Which to the sons of Capet France had sworn.
 There Discord quickly, with her cruel hand,
 In bloody letters marks the cruel law, &c.

(i) There was in the London edition.:

A gladiator vile the head adorn'd
 Rais' by his boldness to that guilty height ;
 Amidst th' august assembly he proceeds,
 By which the fortunes of the realm are rul'd :
 "Ye magistrates," said he, "who senate hold,
 The province of the state, and not the king's,
 The people, under you oppress'd too long,
 By my voice give you their supreme commands.
 Tir'd of the Capet's yoke, tyrannic sway,
 They take from them a pow'r they have abus'd.
 Them to recognize henceforth I forbid ;
 Believe henceforth the people are your lord :
 Obey"—these words, with haughtiness pronounc'd,
 Strike to their souls astonishment extreme.
 Deserving not such insolence, the house,
 Pow'rless to punish, a high silence keeps,

NOTES ON THE FIFTH CANTO.

1 James Clement, of the order of St. Dominic, a native of Sorbonne, a village near Sens, was twenty-four and a half years old, and had come to receive the order of priesthood, when he committed that parricide. The fiction which reigns in the fifth canto, and which may perhaps appear too bold to some readers, is not new. The malice of the leaguers and the fanaticism of the monks of those times caused to be effected, in truth, in the spirit of the people, that which is here but the fiction of the poet.

2. The country of the Ammonites, who cast their infants into the flames, to the sound of drums and trumpets, in honour of the divinity whom they adored, under the name of Moloch.

3. Teutates was one of the gods of the Gauls. It is not certain but that this was the same as Mercury. It is evident, however, that men were sacrificed to him.

4 The enthusiasts who were called independents, were those who took the greatest part in the death of Charles I., king of England.

5. There was printed, and publicly vended, a relation of the martyrdom of brother James Clement, in which assurance was given that an angel had appeared to him, and had ordered him to slay the king, showing him a naked sword. There rested a suspicion, on the public mind, that some of the brotherhood of James Clement, abusing the weakness of that miserable man, had themselves addressed him, during the night, and had easily troubled his head, disturbed by fasting and superstition. However that may be, Clement prepared himself for the parricide, as a good christian would for martyrdom, by mortifications and by prayers. It cannot be doubted but that he was entirely faithful in his crime; for which reason we have taken the part of representing him as a feeble spirit, seduced by simplicity, rather than as a villain led on by a depraved habit.

James Clement left Paris the last of July, 1589, and was carried to St. Cloud by La Guele, attorney-general. He, who suspected some bad design, on the part of the monk, sent some to watch him. They found him in a profound sleep; his breviary was near him, open and all greasy, at the chapter of the murder of Holofernes by Judith. Care has been taken, in the poem, to present the example of Judith to James Clement, in imitation of the preachers of the league, who made use of the holy scriptures to preach up parricide.

We will cite here a passage of a book made by a jacobin, and printed at Troyes by M. Moreau, a little time after the death of James Clement. "In such a manner God hearing favourably the prayer of that his servant, named brother James Clement, one night, as he was on his bed, sent him his angel to that religious man, and showed him a naked sword and said these words to him: "Brother James, I am a messenger of Almighty God, who come to assure you that by you the tyrant of France must be put to death. Bethink yourself then, and prepare yourself as for the crown of righteousness preserved for you." This said, the vision disappeared, and left him to muse on such veritable words. The morning being come, brother James recalled before his eyes the preceding apparition; and, doubtful of what he ought to do, he addressed himself to one of his friends, as religious as himself; a man very learned and well versed in the holy scripture, to whom he freely declared his vision, demanding of him much, if it were a thing agreeable to God to slay a king, who had neither faith nor religion, and who sought but the oppression of his poor subjects; being besmeared with innocent blood, and abounding, as much as possible, in vice. To whom the honest man made answer, that truly we were strictly forbidden of God from being homicides: But inasmuch as the king, whom he understood was a distracted man, and separated from the church, who was bloated with execrable tyrannies, and who had determined to be the perpetual scourge of France, and that without change, he esteemed that he who should put him to death, as Judith did Holofernes, would do a thing very holy and praise-worthy."

6 Catherine de Medicis had made magic so much the fashion in France, that a priest, named Sechelles, who was burnt at Geneva, under Henry III., for sorcery, accused two hundred persons of that pretended crime. Ignorance and stupidity were pushed so far, during that period, that nothing was heard talk of

but exorcisms and condemnation to the flames. There were besides found men sufficiently stupid as to believe themselves magicians, and some superstitious judges who punished them, in good faith, as such.

7 Many of the priests of the league had caused little waxen images to be made which represented Henry III. and the king of Navarre: they put them upon the altar, they pierced them for forty consecutive days during mass, and the fortieth day stabbed them to the heart.

8 It was, ordinarily, Jews whom they used to make perform these magic operations. That ancient superstition comes from the secrets of the cabal, of which the Jews called themselves the sole depositaries. Catharine de Medicis, the wife of the Marhall d'Ancre, and many others, employed Jews at these pretended incantations.

9 Ateius, tribune of the people, not being able to hinder Crassus from setting out to go against the Parthians, carried a burning brazier to the gate of the city by which Crassus was going out, and cast in certain herbs, and cursed the expedition of Crassus, invoking the infernal deities.

10 Potier, president of parliament, of whom we have spoken before.

Villeroi, who had been secretary of state, under Henry III., and who had taken the part of the league, for having been insulted, in the presence of the king, by the Duke d'Epemon.

11 Archilles de Harlay, who was then detained in the Bastile by Bussi-Le-Clerc. James Clement presented a letter to the king from that magistrate. It is unknown whether that letter was counterfeit or not: and that is astonishing in a fact of such importance and which induces me to believe the letter a true one, and that the first president de Harlay had been circumvented; otherwise we should have heard that falsity sounded high against the league.

12 Henry III. died of the wound the 3d, of Aug., at 2 o'clock in the morning, at St. Cloud, but not in the same house where he had taken with his brother the resolve on the St. Barthelemi, as many historians have written; for that mansion was not yet built in the time of the St. Barthelemi.

VARIATIONS OF THE FIFTH CANTO.

(a) After this verse was read, in the edition of 1723, the ten following verses :

By these funereal accents hell is mov'd ;
Leaps then a monster from the deepest night,
A monster who of the abyss and its dark fiends
Unites the rage and poisons in his breast ;
That child of night, in artifice replete,
Knows how t' embellish vice the virtues soil,
Can, by the gloss of his false pencils, give
To criminal greatness the most vivid hues ;
'Tis he, who, clad in sackcloth, smear'd with dust,
Teaches injustice holily to man.

(b) There was in the first London edition :

That realm of sects, at London he inspir'd,
Quakers, and independents, and the throng
Of puritans and unitarians too.

(c) There was in the poem of the league :

Oft in our eyes, all feeble as we are,
See villains bear resemblance to the great.
True zeal and false, cannot distinguish'd be ;
Since truth and error both their votaries have.
The impious fanatic, the christian true,
With the same character are often mark'd.

(d) The edition of 1723, puts in likewise this verse and the following :

Of sombre mysteries there th' utensils are,
The metals constellate, of unknown mark,
Vases with blood and frightful serpents fill'd.
The temple's priest is of that Hebrew race
Who, citizens of the world, by all proscrib'd,

Go carrying to all parts their woe profound,
And with a mass of superstitions old
Have from all time remote, all nations fill'd.
To magic accents, &c.

(e) In all the editions, and even in that of 1751, the canto was terminated by the following verses :

Insensate as they were, they did not see
The depths profound that gap'd beneath their feet ;
They rather ought, foreseeing all their woes,
That triumph vain t' have chang'd to bitter tears.
The victor hero, whom they dar'd distrust,
From his high throne, Henry, was thundering down.
The sceptre, in his hand more fearful made,
Announces to the rebels certain death.
Before him all the chiefs have bent the knee ;
All him recogniz'd for their lawful king ;
And henceforth, certain of the fate of war,
To the earth's ends they swear to follow him.

NOTES ON THE SIXTH CANTO.

1 The sixth and seventh cantos are those in which M. d' Voltaire has made the most changes. That which was the sixth, in the first edition of 1723, is the seventh in the edition of London in 4to., and in the others which followed it; and the beginning of this canto was drawn from the ninth canto of the edition of 1723. Since as much regard is paid in an epic poem to the order of the design as to chronology, we have placed the states of Paris immediately after the death of Henry III., which were in fact not held until four years afterwards.

According to the truth of history, Henry the great besieged Paris some time after the battle of Ivry, in 1590, in the month of April. The Duke of Parma made him raise the siege in the month of September. The leaguers, a long time afterwards, in 1593, assembled the states to elect a king, in the place of the Cardinal de Bourbon, whom it had recognized under the name of Charles X., and who had been dead for two years and a half; and the same year, 1593, in the month of July, the king made his abjuration, at St. Denis, and did not enter Paris till the month of March, 1594.

Of all these events there has been suppressed the arrival of the Duke of Parma and the pretended reign of Charles, Cardinal de Bourbon: It is easy to perceive that to make the Duke of Parma appear upon the scene would have diminished the glory of Henry IV., the hero of the poem, and have been acting precisely against the end of the work; which would have been an unpardonable fault. In respect to the Cardinal de Bourbon, it was not the injury of breaking the unity, so essential in every epic work, in favour of an imaginary king such as this cardinal: It would have been as useless in the poem, as it was in the party of the league. In a word, the Duke of Parma was passed over in silence because he was too great, and the Cardinal de Bourbon because he was too little. We have been obliged to place the states of Paris before the siege, because, had we put them in their order, there would not have been the same occa-

sion to put the virtues of the hero in their day; we could not have made him furnish provisions to the besieged, nor have given him the recompense of his generosity. Moreover the states of Paris are not of that number of events, whose chronology should not be deranged; poetry permits the transposition of all events, which are not too much divided by a great number of years, and which have not between them any necessary connection. For example, I might without any one's reproaching me, make Henry IV. amorous of Gabriella d'Estree during the life of Henry III., because the life and death of Henry III. had nothing in common with the amour of Henry IV. with Gabriella d'Estree. The states of the league have the same situation in respect to the siege of Paris. They are two events absolutely independent of each other. The states had not any effect; they took no resolve; they contributed nothing to the party; there would have been the same chance of assembling them before the siege as after it, and they are much better placed before the siege in the poem; besides, we should consider that an epic poem is not history. We have not known that rule too often represented to readers who would not be instructed:

Far be those fearful rhymers, whose dull wit
Didactic order in their furies keeps,
Who, singing of some chief the high exploits,
Meagre historians, time's succession hold.
The subject from their view they dare not lose;
Lille must surrender first, that Dole may fall.
Like Mezerai, their verses as exact,
Have Courtrai's walls already tumbled down, &c.

2 The Inquisition, which the Guises wished to establish in France.

3 Potier de Blancme'nil, president of parliament, who is mentioned in the fourth and fifth cantos.

4 It was in the wars of Flanders, under Philip II., that an Italian engineer made use of bombs for the first time. Nearly all our arts are due to the Italians.

5 It is well known how many illustrious prisoners of state the Cardinals de Richelieu and Mazarin, caused to be shut up at Vincennes. When I was at work upon the *Henriad*, the secretary of state, Le Blanc, was a prisoner in that castle, and he there afterwards caused his enemies to be enclosed.

VARIATIONS OF THE SIXTH CANTO.

(a) This verse is not found in the first editions. In that of 1723, instead of Potier, the author had put d'Aubray, a personage much less known. Here are the verses which he addressed to those of the leaguers who wished to give the throne to a stranger :

"When I," said he, "beheld assembled here
The church's props, and you our bravest chiefs,
I thought I Frenchmen, and not slaves survey'd.
How ! prompt to bend beneath a shameful yoke.
Dispute ye then no honour but to serve ?
If of seven centuries the rightful heirs
Can Bourbon place not in his father's rank ;
If so oft conquer'd, always less submiss,
We count the Capets 'mongst our enemies ;
Why from a distance seek we servitude,
And casting off our kings, on bended knees,
Wait till a tyrant o'er us deign to rule ?
For the first rank ye will Mayenne," says he, &c.

(b) We read in the edition of 1740, and in the preceding :

The nitre cramm'd within these brazen globes,
Splits, heats, inflames itself, and scatters quick :
Death in a thousand claps, leaps forth enrag'd.

(c) There is in many editions :

With eye firm, stoical, in war he sees
But a chastisement sad for earthly crimes.

(d) There is in the edition of 1727 :

"Oh fatal dweller of the world unseen !
What views," he answers, "bring thee to these realms ?
Com'st thou from hell's dark chasms, or down from heav'n ?
Must I thee worship, or must I abhor ?"

NOTES ON THE SEVENTH CANTO.

1 Whether we admit or not the attraction of M. Newton, it always remains certain that the celestial globes, approaching towards and receding from each other by turns, appear to attract and repel.

2 In Persia, the Guebres have a separate religion which they pretend to be the religion founded by Zoroaster, and which appears less absurd than other human superstitions, since they render a secret worship to the sun, as an image of the Creator.

3 Theologians have not decided, as an article of faith, that hell was in the centre of the earth, as was done in the pagan theology. Some have placed it in the sun: we have placed it here in an orb destined solely for that use.

4 The parricide James Clement was lauded at Rome in the pulpit, where the funeral oration of Henry III. should have been pronounced.

At Paris his portrait was placed on the altars with the sacrament. The Cardinal de Retz reports that the day of the Baricades, under the minority of Louis XIV., he saw a citizen carrying a gorget, upon which this monk was engraven, with these words: "St. James Clement."

5. We may understand by this passage venial faults and purgatory. The ancients themselves admitted one, and we find it expressly in Virgil.

6 Louis XII. is the only king who has had the surname of father of his people.

7 In the meantime died George d'Amboise, who was justly beloved of France and of his master, since he loved them both equally. (Mezerai, Grande Historie.)

8 Amongst the many great men of that name, we have *here* in view Guy de la Tremouille, surnamed the valiant, who bore the oriflamme, and who refused the constable's sword under Charles VI. Clisson, (the Constable de,) under Charles VI.

Montmorenci. A volume would be necessary to specify the services rendered the state by that house.

9 Gaston de Foix, Duke of Nemours, nephew of Louis XII., was slain, by fourteen blows, at the celebrated battle of Ravenna, which he had gained. In some editions we read Dunois.

10 Guesclin. (The Constable du.) He saved France under Charles V., conquered Castile, put Henry de Transtamare on the throne of Peter the cruel, and was Constable of France and Castile.

11 Bayard. (Peter du Terrail, surnamed the chevalier without fear and without reproach.) He armed Francis I. as a knight at the battle of Marignan; he was slain in 1523, at the retreat of Rebec, in Italy.

12 Joan of Arc, known under the name of the Maid of Orleans, a servant in an inn, born at the village of Domremi-sur-Meuse, who, evincing a force of body, and a hardihood above her sex, was employed by the Count de Dunois, to re-establish the affairs of Charles VI. She was taken in a sortie, at Compiègne, in 1430, conducted to Rouen, adjudged as a sorceress, and burnt by the English, who should have honoured her courage.

Behold what has been written, the most reasonable concerning the maid of Orleans: it is Monstrelet, a cotemporary author, who speaks. "And in the year 1428, there came to king Charles of France, at Chinon, where he stayed, a maid, a young woman, of about twenty, named Joan, who was clothed and dressed in man's apparel, and was appertaining to the parties between Burgundy and Lorraine, of a village named Droimi, at present Dromremi, tolerably near Vaucouleur; which young woman, Joan, was a considerable space of time chambermaid at an inn, and was bold to ride horses, to lead them to water, and use such other services and abilities as young woman are not wont to use, and was sent as a messenger and envoy to the king, by a gentleman named M. Roger de Baudrencourt, a captain, from the king, from Vaucouleur," &c.

We know what service was obtained from that young woman to re-animate the courage of the French, who had need of a miracle: it suffices that she was thought to have been sent from God, for a poet to be right in placing her in heaven with the hero. Mezerai says, very obligingly, that St. Michael, the prince of the celestial militia, appeared to that young woman,

&c. which, however it be, if the French were too credulous respecting the Maid of Orleans, the English were too cruel in having her burnt to death ; since they had nothing to reproach her with but courage, and their defeats.

13 The Cardinal Mazarin was obliged to quit the kingdom in 1651, *maugre* the queen regent, whom he governed ; but the Cardinal de Richelieu stood his ground always, notwithstanding his enemies, and even *maugre* the king, who was disgusted with him.

14 The people, that ferocious and blind monster, detested the great Colbert, so much as to desire to disinter his body ; but the voice of rational men, which at length prevails, has rendered his memory for ever dear and respectable.

15 Louis XIV.

16 The Academy of Sciences, whose memoirs are *esteemed* throughout all Europe.

17 Louis de Bourbon, commonly called the great Conde, and Henry, Viscount de Turenne have been regarded as the greatest captains of their time ; both of them obtained great victories, and acquired glory even in their defeats. The genius of the Prince de Conde appeared, as has been said, more proper for the day of battle, and that of M. de Turenne, for a whole campaign. At least it is certain that M. de Turenne obtained some advantages over the great Conde at Gien, at Estampes, at Paris, at Arras, at the battle of the Downs ; meantime one dare not decide which was the greater man.

18 The Marshall de Catinat, born in 1637. He gained the battles of Stafford and Marseilles, and obeyed, afterwards, without murmuring, the Marshall de Villeroi, who sent him orders, without consulting him. He left the command, without pain ; complained of no one ; demanded nothing of the king ; died *like* a philosopher at a little country house at St. Gratien, having neither increased or diminished his patrimony, and having never disgraced his character for moderation.

19 The Marshall de Vauban, born in 1633, and the greatest engineer that had ever been, caused three hundred ancient places to be fortified, and built thirty-three after his manner ; he conducted fifty-three sieges, and was present at a hundred and

forty actions ; he left twelve manuscript volumes, full of plans for the good of the state, which have never yet been executed. He belonged to the Academy of Sciences, and has done it more honour than any other person, in causing mathematics to be used for the advantage of his country.

20 Francis-Henry de Montmorenci, who took the name of Luxembourg, Marshall of France, duke and peer, gained the battle of Cassel, under the orders of Monsieur, the brother of Louis XIV., and obtained himself the famous victories of Mons, of Fleurus, of Steinkirke, of Nerwinda, and conquered some provinces for the king. He was sent to the Bastile, and received a thousand mortifications from the ministers.

21 It was our purpose not to speak in this poem of any living man ; we have not deviated from the rule but in favour of the Marshall Duke de Villars.

He gained the battle of Fredelingue and that of the first Hochstet. It is to be remarked that he occupied in that battle the same ground where the Duke of Marlborough afterwards posted himself, when he obtained over those other generals that great victory of the second Hochstet, so fatal to France.

Afterwards, the Marshall de Villars, having retaken the command of the armies, fought the famous battle of Blangis or Malplaquet, in which there were slain twenty thousand men of the enemy, and which was not lost until the Marshall was wounded.

At length, in 1712, when the enemy were threatening to come to Paris, and when deliberation was held whether Louis XIV. should quit Versailles, the Marshall de Villars beat the Prince Eugene, at Denain, seized upon the dépôt of the hostile army at Marchiennes, caused the siege of Landrecy to be raised, took Douay, Quesnoy, Bouchain, &c., at discretion, and afterwards ratified peace, at Rastadt, in the name of the king, with the same Prince Eugene, plenipotentiary of the emperor.

22 The deceased M. the Duke of Burgundy.

23 This poem was composed during the infancy of Louis XV.

24 A true portrait of Philip Duke of Orleans, regent of the kingdom.

25 During the time when this was written, the French and Spanish branches seemed disunited.

VARIATIONS OF THE SEVENTH CANTO.

(a) The whole commencement of this canto is entirely different in the first editions.

O'er all the airs the veils of night were stretch'd;
Silence profound reign'd o'er the universe.
Henry, about to face new dangers, lay,
Within his camp, upon his arms asleep.
A hero, from the vault of heav'n come down,
A minister of God, his eyes possess'd;
That warrior saint it was, who, far from France,
On Afric's sands to die or conquer, went;
The generous Louis, of the Bourbons sire,
On whom the Lord his noblest gifts had shower'd.
Shone, on his head, a brilliant diadem;
He himself puts it on the new chiefs' front;
"Receive thou it," says he, "from Louis' hand;
Me for thy sire accept, become my son.
Virtue, which ever led you in my path,
Has nearer brought the time which us divides;
My blood I own, transmitted you by God;
And all my race's hope in thee is plac'd.
This sceptre must not thee, my son, suffice;
Possess my wisdom, as thou dost my realm.
Small is that glory vain which passes, flies,
Which toil accompanies and death destroys;
These mundane honours are a sterile good,
Of human virtues the weak recompense.
Dare to be jealous of a good more pure:
Nought hath God giv'n till he enlighten thee.
When shall I see thy warlike worth, my son,
By him supported, in his light march on?
But still how far those times, those happy times,
When God shall number thee amongst his sons!
Of what sad weaknesses shalt thou make proof!
And in deceiving paths how wilt thou wend!

Dare, now, through ways unknown, my steps pursue,
And France's destiny come learn with me."

Henry, at this, thought, in a car of light,
Quickly he penetrated heav'n's career ;
As, in the night, the thunder flash is seen
From pole to pole fly quick and cleave the airs.

Amidst those whirlwinds which, with teeming hand,
Th' eternal at the world's first day dispos'd,
On heaven's high top is elevate an orb,
Which hides its glory from our eyes profane ;
There the Most High has in his likenéss form'd
Those deathless spirits, of his essence sons,
Who, quickly scatter'd over diverse worlds,
People the universe with living forms.
There, after death, our souls again are plung'd,
From their gross prison set forever free.
When God, who made them, to his bosom calls
Forthwith to him, with rapid course, they fly.
As in the woods th' uncertain leaves are seen,
From the high oaks, with noise confus'd, to fall
When, messengers of winter, the north winds
The cold bring back, and whistle through the airs ;
So to these awful regions death leads off
Of short liv'd mortals th' unnumber'd troops.

(b) There is in the edition of 1727, after these verses :

Their torments, vows, their faith, their ignorance,
Unpunish'd stay, and unrewarded are ;
Them God not punishes for having clos'd
Their eyes on lights which he so far has plac'd.
He does not judge, them as a lord unjust,
By christian laws they could not understand,
By the rash zealousness of their holy rage ;
But by that simple law which speaks to all.
Its daughter and our mother, nature there
Us in his name below instructs and guides ;
Us with instinctive virtues loves to fill,
And in our youth she teaches us to blush ;
Pure in our childhood, alter'd in our age,
She weeps those sons by whom she is unknown :
She weeps ; and her laments, which we not hear
Against us rise, in the dark hour of death.

And, in the edition of 1723, after this verse ;

Of wandering mortals the unnumber'd troops.

We read :

An incorrupt'ble judge, with equal laws,
Nations and kings there gathers at his feet.
All trembling stand ; the dead in silence wait
Shuddering before him, their eternal doom ;
He, who, at once, sees, hears, and all things knows,
Them, with a glance, or punishes or absolves :
There of his agents a remorseless band
Incessantly divide the good and bad ;
Torments the ones, the others pleasures give
Of crimes and virtues the eternal meed.
But whence, great God, arise these dreadful cries ?

(c) In the place of this verse and the eleven following, see what was read in the edition of 1723 :

At first, on all sides in their way appear'd
Despair and fury, massacre and death,
Those hideous vices all, by griefs pursued,
In hell's depth's form'd, or rather in our hearts ;
Pride with his brazen front, loose Perfidy,
Who hides himself at first, and, cringing, bows,
Then raising quick a homicidal arm,
Makes his snakes hiss around and brings on death ;
Avarice pale-tinted, Envy there and Hate,
Falsehood, Hypocrisy, her sister too,
Who downcast looking, censer in her hand,
Sighing, distils her venom and her rage.
False Zeal, &c.

(d) Are ye then here ye weak and tender hearts ?

Instead of this verse and the seven which follow it, here are eight others which were inserted in the edition of 1723 :

Subjects revolted, adulators loose,
Th' informer infamous and the judge corrupt,
Those too, who nourish'd on the breast of sloth,
A feeble heart possess'd, their only crime ;
Those who deliver'd to their flattering whims,
But their sweet errors nought have known or lov'd ;
All finally, the eternal prey of death,

Suffer chastisements which surpass their crimes.
The generous Henry, &c.

And in that of 1737, see how these last verses are altered ;

Thus, thus it is, within this place of griefs,
Hearts that have nought but their sweet errors lov'd ;
Those mortal crowds in effem'nacy drown'd,
Whom pleasures led away, whom sloth had lull'd, &c.

We see, by all these different changes, with what extreme attention, and with what severity, the author has revised his work ; it is thus that every one should do, who labours for posterity.

(e) In the edition of 1723 we read these verses, which the author has suppressed in the other editions ; viz :

Anthony of Navarre, with eyes surpriz'd,
Henry, advancing, sees, his son he knows :
At his sire's feet the soften'd hero falls ;
To the dear shade he thrice his arms extends,
From his embraces thrice the sire escapes,
Like a light cloud that's scatter'd by the winds.
Meanwhile to that delighted shade he shows
His grandeur, views the order of his host,
And both his former toils and late exploits.
The heroes all rush round him, at his voice.
Martels and Pepins him in silence heard,
And, in him, they respected France's fame.
At length the saint-chief, following his designs,
" My steps pursue," exclaims, " to fates high fane ;
Let us advance, 'tis time for you to know
Heroes and kings who must from thee arise.
That temple's walls already you behold."
And at his look, &c.

(f) M. de Voltaire had also changed the two verses on M. de Vauban.

That chief, whose hand gave strength unto our walls,
Is Vauban, friend of virtue and the arts.

But, in the last editions, he has re-established them as they were in the first ; they recal these verses of Athalié ;

Meanwhile Athalié, poignard in her hand,
Laughs at our feeble walls, our gates of brass.

(g) Instead of this verse, and the eighteen which follow it, here is what was inserted in the edition of 1723 :

Of the French realm the sweet and fragile hope ;
 O ye, who o'er his youthful days preside,
 Ye, Fleury, Villeroi, beneath your eyes,
 Keep this lov'd depôt of my purest blood ;
 His docile youth conduct ye by the hand :
 Plain is the path of virtue at that age :
 Blest age, from passion free, whilst his young heart
 Of vice th' impression has not yet receiv'd ;
 When of a court deceitful the foul breath
 Warm to deceive us, has not injured him ;
 Blest age, whilst he, yet ign'rant of his pow'r,
 Lives tranquil and submiss to duty's rules.
 Learn him, no more a child, himself to know ;
 To think himself a man, the lord of men ;
 Attentive to his hapless people's wants,
 Them let him not with rigorous burdens charge :
 To pardon let him love : with prudence give
 To render'd service its just recompense ;
 Let him no ins'lent minister permit
 Into a heavy yoke his lov'd reign change ;
 E'er let his simple virtue, shorn of aids,
 By benefits wise anticipated be ;
 The laws of friendship let him cherish, pure,
 Of heav'n the gift, but little known to kings ;
 And, worthy of his high state, O, if he can,
 Let him great Henry's steps and mine pursue.

(h) There is in the edition 1727 :

Throughout his life unfortunate fore'er,
 A genius having had from heav'n too vast,

And that of 1723, printed the same year in which the regent died, there were but these four verses :

Near that young king, a hero high regard,
 Born for all toils, for all employments fit :
 He joins a subject's to a master's pow'rs :
 He is no king, my son, but ought to be.

NOTES ON THE EIGHTH CANTO.

1 He caused himself to be declared, by the parliamentary party which remained attached to him, lieutenant-general of the state and kingdom of France.

2 The Lorraines. The Chevalier d'Aumale, of whom we have so often spoken, and his brother the duke, were of the house of Lorraine.

Charles-Emanuel, duke of Nemours, uterine brother of the Duke de Mayenne.

La Chatre was one of the marshalls of the league who were called bastards, that, at a future day, would make themselves legitimate at the expense of their father. In effect, La Chatre afterwards made his peace, and Henry confirmed him in the dignity of marshall of France.

3 Joyeuse is the same of whom mention is made in the fourth canto, note first.

St. Paul, a soldier of fortune, made marshall by the same Duke de Mayenne, a rash and extremely violent man. He was slain by the Duke de Guise, son of Balafre.

Brissac had thrown himself into the party of the league through indignation at Henry III., who had said he was neither good on land or sea. He negotiated afterwards, secretly, with Henry IV., and opened to him the gates of Paris, obtaining the baton of marshall of France.

4 The Count d'Egmont, son of the Admiral d'Egmont who was decapitated at Brussels with the Prince de Horn. The son, having remained with the party of Philip II., king of Spain, was sent to the assistance of the Duke de Mayenne, at the head of eighteen hundred lances. On his entry into Paris, he received the compliments of the city. He, who harangued him, having mingled in his discourse the praises of the Admiral d'Egmont, his father: "speak not of him," said the count, "he merited death; he was a rebel." Words the more worthy of condemnation, as it was to rebels he was speaking, and whose cause he had come to defend.

5 It was in a plain, between Iton and Eurus, that the battle of Ivry was fought, the 14th of March, 1590.

6 John d'Aumont, marshall of France, who performed wonders at the battle of Ivry, was son of Peter d'Aumont, gentleman of the chamber, and of Frances de Sully, heiress of the ancient house of Sully. He served under the kings Henry II., Francis II., Charles IX., Henry III., and Henry IV.

7 Henry de Gontaud de Biron, marshall of France, grand master of artillery, was a very warlike man; he commanded, at Ivry, the corps de reserve, and contributed to the gaining of the battle, by presenting himself to the enemy very apropos. He said to Henry the great, after the victory: "Sire, you have done that which Biron ought to have done, and Biron, what the king should have done." This marshall was slain, by a cannon shot, in 1572, at the seige of Epernai.

8 Charles Gontaud de Biron, marshall, and duke, and peer, son of the preceding one, conspired, afterwards, against Henry IV., and was beheaded, in the court of the Bastile, in 1602. There are still to be seen, on the wall, the iron staples which served for the scaffold.

9 In Britannicus, Agrippina, speaking of the care which she had taken in giving Nero virtuous instructors, says:

I call'd from exile, from the army drew,
Both this same Seneca, this Burrhus too,
Who since——their virtues Rome esteem'd them high.

10 Rosny, afterwards Duke de Sully, superintendent of the finances, grand master of artillery, made marshall of France after the death of Henry IV., received seven wounds at the battle of Ivry. He was born at Rosny, in 1559, and died at Villebon, in 1641; thus he had seen Henry II. and Louis XIV.; inspector general and grand master of artillery, grand master of the ports of France, superintendent of the finances, duke, and peer, and marshall of France. He is the only man the baton of marshall was ever given to as a mark of disgrace: he had it but in exchange for the charge of grand master of artillery, which the queen regent took away from him in 1634. He was a very brave warrior, and a still better minister, incapable of deceiving the king, or of being deceived by the finan-

ciers ; he was unbending towards the courtiers, whose avidity is insatiable, and who found in him a rigour conformable to the economical humour of Henry IV. They called him the Negative, and it has been said, that the word yes was never in his mouth.

With that severe virtue he never pleased any one but his master, and the moment of the death of Henry IV. was that of his disgrace. King Louis XIII. caused him to revisit the court, some years afterwards, to ask him his advice. He went, though with repugnance. The young courtiers, who governed Louis XIII., wished, according to their custom, to turn this old minister into ridicule, who re-appeared in a young court, with the habits and manners of times long past. The Duke de Sully, who perceived it, said to the king : " Sire, when the king, your father, of glorious memory, did me the honour of consulting me, we did not commence speaking on business, till previously he had sent the fops and buffoons of court into the anti-chamber."

He composed, in the solitude of Sully, some memoirs, in which reigns the air of an honest man, with a style naïvé, but too diffuse.

There are some verses found of his fashioning, which are not much better than his prose. Here are those he composed when he retired from court, under the regency of Mary de Medicis :

Adieu maisons, chateaux, armes, canons du roi ;
 Adieu conseils, tresors depose a ma foi ;
 Adieu munitions, adieu grand equipages ;
 Adieu tant de rachats, adieu tant de menages ,
 Adieu faveurs, grandeurs ; adieu le temps qui court ;
 Adieu les amities et les amis de cour, etc.

He would never change his religion ; meantime he was one of the first to advise Henry IV. to attend mass.

The Cardinal du Perron exhorting him one day to quit calvanism, he replied to him : " I will be a catholic when you shall have suppressed the gospel ; for it is so contrary to the Romish church, that I cannot believe them both to have been inspired by the same spirit.

The pope, one day, wrote him a letter filled with praises of the wisdom of his ministry ; the pope finished his letter, like a good pastor, by praying God that he would lead back his scattered flock, and conjuring the Duke de Sully to make use of

his lights to enter into the good way. The duke answered him in the same tone; he assured him that he prayed God daily for the conversion of his holiness. This letter is in his memoirs.

Nangis, a man of great merit and of a true virtue: he had counselled Henry III. not to have the Duke of Guise assassinated, but to have the courage to judge him according to the laws.

Crillon was surnamed the brave. He offered Henry IV. to fight against the same Duke de Guise. It was to this Crillon whom Henry the great wrote: "Hang thyself, brave Crillon; we have fought at Arques, and thou wast not there. — Adieu, brave Crillon; I love thee carelessly."

11 Henry de la Tour de Orliagues, Viscount de Turenne, marshall of France. Henry the great married him to Charlotte de la Mark, princess of Sedan, in 1591. The night of his nuptials the marshall went to take Stonay by assault.

12 The sovereignty of Sedan, acquired by Henry de Turenne, was lost by Frederick-Maurice, Duke de Bouillon, his son, who having a hand in the conspiracy of the 5th March against Louis XII., or rather against the Cardinal de Richelieu, gave up Sedan to preserve his life: he had in exchange for his sovereignty some large possessions, more considerable in revenue, but which gave more riches and less power.

13 Claude, Duke de la Tremouille, was at the battle of Ivry. He had great courage and an excessive ambition, great riches, and was the most considerable lord amongst the calvinists. He died at thirty-eight.

14 Never did a man better merit the title of happy; he commenced by being a simple soldier, and finished by being constable under Louis XIII.

Balsac de Clermont d'Entragues, uncle of the famous Marquis de Verneuil, was slain at the battle of Ivry; Fenquières and de Nesle, captains of five hundred warriors, were slain there also.

15 We have endeavoured to render into verse the very words which Henry IV. spake at the battle of Ivry: "Rally yourselves to my white plume, you will always find it in the path of honour and of glory."

16 The bayonet at the end of the musket was not in use till a long time afterwards. The name bayonet comes from Bayonne, where the first bayonets were made.

17 Duplessis-Mornay had two horses killed under him in this battle. He had in truth, during the action, the coolness for which he is here praised.

18 The Duke de Biron was wounded at Ivry; but it was at the combat of French Fountain that Henry the great saved his life. That event has been transposed to the battle of Ivry, which, not being a principal fact, could be easily displaced.

19 It was not at Ivry, it was at the battle of Aumale, that Henry IV. was wounded: he had the goodness, afterwards, to put the soldier who had wounded him amongst his guards.

The reader has easily perceived, without doubt, that it was impossible to speak of all the battles of Henry the great in a poem where the unity of action must be observed. That prince was wounded at Aumale; he saved the life of the Marshall de Biron at French Fountain. These are events which merit being sung by the poet; but he could not place them in the times wherein they happened: It was necessary for him to collect as many separate actions as he could; that he should refer them to the same epoch; in a word that he should compose an unity of these different parts: without that, it is absolutely impossible to make an epic poem founded on history.

Henry IV. was not wounded at all at Ivry, but he ran a great risk of his life; he was besides surrounded by three Walloon Cornets, and would have perished there had he not been disengaged by the Marshal d'Aumont, and by the Duke de la Tremouille. His friends thought him dead, for some time, and uttered loud shouts of joy when they saw him return, sword in hand, covered all over with the blood of his enemies. I shall remark, that after the wound of the king, at Aumale, Duplessis-Mornay wrote to him: "Sire, you have sufficiently acted the Alexander, it is time for you to perform Cesar; it is our business to die for your majesty, and it is your glory to live for us, sire: and I dare to tell you that it is your duty."

VARIATIONS OF THE EIGHTH CANTO.

(a) Here is the commencement of this canto in the edition of 1723 :

Paris, at all times furious and unjust,
For the king's death to heav'n put up her thanks.
The people, who staid prudence ne'er possess'd,
Were foolishly intoxicate with hope ;
But Philip, at the news of Valois' death,
Shook, for the first time, trembling on his throne.
Re-gathering, he the Bourbon forces saw ;
Under their steps the throne's access made plain ;
An indefatigable chief and firm,
Both in adversity and labours taught,
And who might shortly, by his vengeance led,
The ills of France bear backward on Madrid ;
He thought 'twas time th' assistance now to send
So long demanded, and defer'd so long.
To the Seine's borders, from the Escaut's shores,
Mayenne to join, the hapless Egmont came.

(b) These four verses are wanting, which are in the edition of 1723 :

Henry, from that scared city's wall afar,
To Ivry's plains had led his army on,
On his steps drawing Mayenne and the league,
Whom to misfortune blindness urg'd amain.

The author has retrenched these, to the end that the words from the walls, should not break upon the unity of place.

(c) After this verse, we read the following in the edition of 1723 :

There oft the shepherds leading on their flocks,
To music's sound aroused the echoes up ;
There the light deer, the timid roe-buck there,
Anet's fair nymph's in rapid chase pursued :
The tranquil zephyrs dwelt upon those banks ;
Her useful treasures Ceres there spread forth.
'Twas there that Destiny the armies led,

With equal ardour for the combat warm'd ;
Their fierce battalions Ceres quick beheld
Ravage her gifts within the furrows born.
Eurus and Iton's waves th' alarm perceiv'd ;
In the deep forests lay their nymphs conceal'd.
From those fair seats, the 'frighted shepherd chas'd,
His friendly fire-side fled with tearful eyes.

(d) See the variation (g)

(e) We read in the edition of 1723, as follows :

Sancy that magistrate, minister, warrior brave,
In th' senate, army, and at court esteem'd ;
Tremouille, Clermont, Tournemine, d'Angenne ;
And, of the Romish purple that proud foe,
Mornay, whose eloquence his valour peer'd,
Of error's party the too worthy stay.
There appear'd Noailles, Givri, Fauquières,
Hapless de Nesle, Desdigières blest.

Nicholas de Harlai de Sancy was successively counsellor to parliament, master of requests, ambassador to England and to Germany, colonel-general of the Swiss, the king's premier maitre de hotel, superintendent of finance, and united in his person the ministry, the magistracy, and the command of armies. He was the son of Robert de Harlai, counsellor of parliament and Jacqueline Morvilliers ; he was born in 1546, and died in 1629.

Whilst he was yet but master of requests, he was found in the council of Henry III., when a consultation was held on the means of sustaining the war against the league ; he proposed raising an army of Swiss. The council, who were aware that the king had not a single sous, laughed at him : " gentlemen," said Sancy, " since of all those who have received so many benefits from the king, there is found no one who is willing to assist him, I declare to you, it shall be myself who will raise this army." The commission was forthwith given him, but no money, and he set off for Switzerland. Never was there so singular a negotiation. At first he persuaded the inhabitants of Geneva and the Swiss to make war on the Duke of Savoy, conjointly with France ; he promised them cavalry, which he did not furnish ; he caused them to raise ten thousand infantry, and engaged to give them besides a hundred thousand crowns. When he found himself at the head of this army he took some places from the Duke of Savoy ; afterwards he had so well learned how to gain the Swiss, that he engaged them to march their

army to the assistance of the king, Thus the Swiss were seen for the first time giving both men and money.

Sancy, in this negotiation, spent one part of his patrimony: he put his diamonds in pledge, and, amongst others, that famous one named, "The Sancy," which is at present in the crown.

That diamond, which passed for the most beautiful in Europe, had, at first, belonged to the unhappy king of Portugal, Don Anthony, who was chased from his country by Philip II. Don Anthony had fled into France, having nothing at all save a saddle garnished with jewels, and a little coffer in which he had some diamonds.

The one of which we are speaking is a tolerable large diamond that he placed in his hat, and of which he was very fond. It was this of which he deprived himself last; he put it in pawn into the hands of Sancy, who let him have 40,000 francs on it. The king not being in a situation to repay that sum, the diamond remained with Sancy, who was ashamed of holding for so moderate a sum, a piece of so great value. He sent 10,000 crowns to the king, Don Anthony, and might even have given more.

Sancy, whilst superintendent of the finances under Henry IV., was disgraced, according to the report of de Thou, because he had said to the Duchess de Beaufort that her children were not the sons of the P.

It is more probable that the king deprived him of the finances because he was much better accommodated by Rosni. Sancy besides was not disgraced, since the king, in 1604, named him Chevalier of the Order. He became a catholic some time after Henry IV., saying, that he must be of the same religion as his prince. It was on this that d'Aubigné, who did not love him, composed the ingenious and biting satire entitled, "The catholic confession of Sancy," printed with the journal of Henry III.

(f) There is in the edition of 1727, and the succeeding ones :

Round, like some pow'rful genius, he him guards :

"See you," says he, "that squadron which gives ground ?

There, near that wood, Mayenne has taken stand :

D'Aumale approaches, march we on this side."

Mornay the prince re-seeks, rejoins, escorts, &c.

(g) This episode is much less ornamented, and less touching in the first editions. Here it is as it appeared in the poem of the league :

Of d'Aumont proud the unconquerable worth

Th' affrighten'd troop of Nemours back repuls'd ;

D'Ailly throughout bore havoc, and bore death,
 The scatter'd leaguers fled before his steps ;
 Stemming the tempest of a thousand darts,
 His onward course a daring youth arrests.
 With headlong speed they on each other sweep,
 Vict'ry and death are flying at their sides ;
 A hundred times they strike, as oft repulse ;
 Their courage augments, but their swords grow dull :
 Defended by their bucklers and their casques,
 The formidable steel's quick blows the ward ;
 At such resistance each of them amaz'd,
 Respects his rival and admires his pow'rs.
 At length, old d'Ailly, by a hapless blow.
 Brings to his feet the generous warrior down.
 His eyes forever to the light are clos'd,
 Near him his helmet rolls along the dust.
 D'Ailly his visage sees, O death, despair !
 He sees, embraces ; 'twas, alas, his son.
 The miserable father, bath'd in tears,
 Turns on himself his parricidal arms.
 They stop him ; they his fury just oppose ;
 He from that scene of horrors hies away ;
 Detests fore'er his guilty victory ;
 The court renounces, glory and mankind ;
 And flying from himself to deserts deep,
 To hide his woe seeks earth's remotest bounds .
 There whether Sol restores to earth the day,
 Or in the ocean's bosom stops his course,
 His voice the tender echoes makes repeat
 The sad, sad name of his unhappy son.
 Ah heav'ns ! what fearful cries throughout are heard !

(h) In the edition of 1727, we read :

What see I ? 'tis thy king t' assist thee flies ;
 He sees the danger menacing thy days :
 He sees it, flies to thee, pursuit gives o'er
 Of those who urg'd their flight, before him, on ;
 He comes, appears there like a threat'ning god.
 Back d'Aumale, shudd'ring at his sight, recoils ;
 All tremble at his view, all scatter, yield.

(i) Here are the verses which appear at the end of this in the edition of 1723 :

Egmont a courtier base, a soldier rash,
 Slave of the tyrant who his father slew.
 Th' unfortunate ! on unknown shores, he dar'd
 Glory and danger, in the combat, seek ;
 And cherishing disgrace, in shameful chains,
 His sire and country dar'd not to avenge.
 He came ; the hero quick him overthrow ;
 His glittering steel, &c.

(k) There was in the first edition :

Rushes the king then, o'er his blood-stain'd corpse,
 Resistless towards Mayenne like lightning's glance ;
 Attacks, astounds him, presses, and his arm,
 Suspended, death, each instant, o'er him held.
 That arm, O brave Mayenne, had shorn thy life ;
 The league had fainted, and the war been done :
 But d'Aumale and St. Paul rush'd instant up ;
 Surround him, snatch him from awaiting death.
 What do I see ? at the same time, some hand
 Unknown, great Henry strikes with blow unseen.
 'Twas thus of old, amid those fabled times
 Which love of fiction has so famous made,
 Before those walls which Hector could not save,
 In gory fight, on the Scamander's banks,
 Oft were those furious mortals seen to dare
 The gods, with sacrilegious steel, to wound.

But that which the author has substituted is incomparably better.

(l) After this verse, here are those which are found in the edition of 1723 :

" Born me t' annoy, ye people, live ;" he cried ;
 " Henry would conquer you, but not destroy :
 That single virtue should your rage disarm.
 Live ! it is much to fear me, learn to love."
 He says, and stopping quick the carnage-rage
 Lord of his bands, their courage bends submiss.
 No more the lion, &c.

(m) Instead of these four verses we read in the edition of 1740:

It is a beneficent god, his thunders left,
 Who to war's honours makes the calm succeed,
 Consols the vanquish'd on the victors smiles,
 Comforts, rewards, and gains the hearts of all.

NOTES ON THE NINTH CANTO.

1 This description of the temple of love, and the picture of that passion personified, are entirely allegorical.

The place of the scene is laid in Cyprus, as the abode of Policy is placed at Rome, because the people of the isle of Cyprus have passed ever for being very much addicted to love, as has the court of Rome ever had the reputation of being the most politic court of Europe.

We must not here regard Love as the son of Venus, and as a fabulous god, but as a passion represented with all the pleasures and all the evils which accompany it.

2 Vanclausa, Valischausa, near Gordes in Provence, celebrated as the abode of Petrarch in its environs. There still appears near its commencement a mansion which is called the house of Petrarch.

3 Anet was built by Henry II. for Diana de Poitiers, whose figures are intermingled with all the ornaments of that castle, which is not very far from the plains of Ivry.

4 Gabriella d'Estree, of an ancient house of Picardy, daughter and grand-daughter of a grand master of artillery, married to Lord de Liancourt, and afterwards Duchess de Beaufort, &c.

Henry IV. became enamoured during the civil wars ; he stole away frequently to go and see her. One day, moreover, he disguised himself as a peasant, passed through the guards of the enemy, and arrived at her house, not without running the risk of being taken.

These details may be seen in the history of the loves of great Alcander, written by a princess de Conti.

5 Cleopatra going to Tarsus, whither Anthony had ordered her, made that voyage on a vessel brilliant with gold and ornamented with the most beautiful pictures ; the sails were

purple, the cords of silk and gold. Cleopatra was habited as they then represented the goddess Venus; her women represented the nymphs and the graces; the stern and prow were filled with the most beautiful children disguised as Loves. She advanced, in this equipage, on the river Cydnus, to the sound of a thousand instruments of music. All the people of Tarsus took her for that goddess. They quit the tribunal of Anthony to run and meet her: that Roman himself went to receive, and became desperately enamoured of her. (Plutarch.)

VARIATIONS OF THE NINTH CANTO.

(a) Instead of the eight following verses, there appears in the edition of 1723 these :

In those soft climes where Indolence resides.
Seduc'd by plenty, there the slothful crowd
Have never exercis'd in useful toils
Their languid bodies enervate by rest.
In leisure there profound, with cares untouch'd,
Effeminacy a peaceful silence keeps :
Solely, at times, is heard upon the air
Of tenderest concerts the soft warbling sounds,
Songs of a thousand lovers, &c.

(b) See how the edition of 1723 has put these two verses :

Arm'd with his shafts, more rapid than heav'n's bolts,
Bears in his feeble hands earth's destiny.

(c) The edition of 1723 has this verse :

The plain, where erst was seen the walls of Troy.

(d) In the edition of 1723 was read :

Forthwith in Provence he that fountain saw
Whose amiable pow'r eterniz'd the desires,
When the soft Petrarch, in his flowery youth,
On those enchanting borders breath'd his loves.

(e) Instead of these verses, we read in the edition of 1723 :

Nought e'er beneath the heav'ns more beauteous shone,
And she alone knew not her eyes' bright pow'r.
She to that formidable age had come, &c.

(f) In the edition of 1723 is read :

Before the monarch he her steps conducts.
He, at that meeting present, arm'd throughout,

Lights in their souls a flame before unknown,
Inspires them with those feelings and those cares
Which still increasing the great passions form.
Brave Henry oft his deathless valour call'd, &c

(g) But d'Estree, nothing loves, sees, hears, or knows.

After this verse we read in the edition of 1723 :

'Twas then were seen, within the arms of rest,
Disarming that high chief, the Pleasures light ;
One held his cuirass, yet with blood distain'd,
Detach'd, his formidable sword one held,
And laugh'd, at seeing in his feeble hands
That steel, the throne's defence, the fear of man.
The charms of love whilst Henry tasted here,
Throughout the camp his absence spread alarm ;
His downcast soldiers, his dishearten'd chiefs,
No more beneath him marching, seem'd o'ercome.
But that blest genius who o'er France presides
His dangerous absence did not suffer long ;
Light wing'd and prompt, she Sully goes to seek,
And his king's weakness and disgrace him tells.
Friend no less prudent than as sage austere, &c.

(h) These two verses are also in edition of 1723 :

An other had a censor's front despis'd :
" Friend," said the king, " thou can'st not me displease.
Thy prince's heart is worthy of thee still," &c.

NOTES ON THE TENTH CANTO.

1 The Chevalier d'Aumale was slain, about this time, at St. Denis, and his death much enfeebled the party of the league. His duel with the Viscount de Turenne is but a fiction; but the single combats were still in fashion. There was a celebrated one behind the Carthusians, between the Sieur de Marivaux, who was on the side of the royalists, and Sieur Claude de Marolles, who was on the league's side. They fought in the presence of the people and of the army, the very day of the assassination of Henry III.; but it was Marolles that was victor.

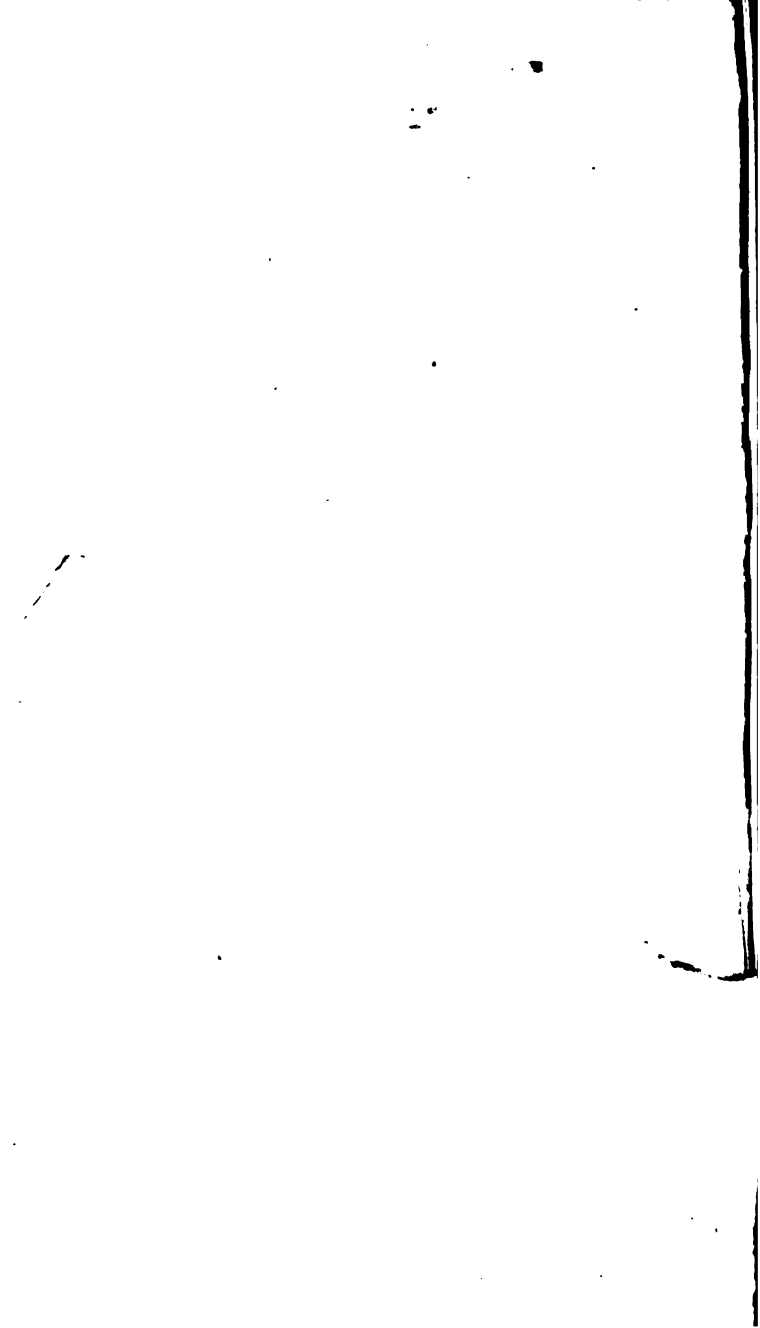
2 Henry IV. blockaded Paris in 1590, with less than twenty thousand men.

3 It was the Spanish ambassador to the league, who gave counsel to make bread with the bones of the dead; a counsel which was executed, and which served only to hasten the days of many thousand men. Respecting which the strange weakness of the human imagination is remarkable. The besieged did not by any means dare to eat the flesh of their countrymen who had been slain, but they very willingly ate the bones.

4 A visitation was made, says Mezerai, to the lodgings of the ecclesiastics and to the convents, which appeared all furnished, even that of the capauchins, for more than a year.

5 The Swiss, who were at Paris in the pay of the Duke de Mayenne, committed these frightful excesses, according to the report of all the historians of the time; it is upon them alone the name of Carbarian falls, and not upon their nation; a nation full of good sense and of justice, and one of the most respectable in the world, since it thinks only of preserving its own liberty, and never of oppressing that of others.

E.B.



ELM...

